US Labor lauds NMI for proper implementation of PUA. PAGE 2
One positive COVID-19 case ID'd via contact tracing. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 5, 2021
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EVENING STROLL
A woman wades along the shore of the Saipan lagoon Tuesday evening at sunset as a Military Sealift Command prepositioning ship lies at anchor off Garapan.
MARK FARMER

Over 30% drop in CW-1 workforce

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

First part of a series

» 40% drop in foreign workers from 2019 to 2020

The CNMI saw an over 30% drop in its foreign workforce from 2020 to 2021 alone and an over 40% plunge compared to the year 2019.

Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente said in an interview that the CNMI saw an all-time low in its CNMI Only Transitional Worker, or CW-1, workforce in the last two years since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This was determined, Benavente said, because employers are required to advertise jobs for CW-1 workers on the DOL website, marianaslabor.

See CW-1 on Page 4

GCEA's MVP campaign empowers Rota residents

TOGETHER, WE CAN

By EFRAIM ATALIG
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Efraim Atalig is the mayor of Rota. He leads the municipality's community programs with the mission to improve the quality of life for all residents living and working in the community.

Håfa Adai yan Tirow Wóómi, with our signature *Aluf*, from your friendly island of Luta.

When the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers visited Rota in May this year to help spruce up our youth center and basketball court, our residents were motivated to do their part in the village facilities and destination sites' transformation initiative through the Public Private Partnership program. We've made some progress in our collaborative efforts to

See TOGETHER on Page 4

Restraining order vs Camacho OK'd

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Superior Court has granted the temporary restraining order requested by a man who alleged that Rep. Vicente Camacho (D-Saipan) and two others assaulted him last Friday, Oct. 29.

Camacho

Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan signed off last Tuesday on the temporary restraining order requested by Steve Koch, a 59-year-old man who alleged that Camacho and two others "jumped" him late Friday evening.

The temporary

See CAMACHO on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 6:29pm, Nov. 4, 2021

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Fully Vaccinated:	83.9%
Days since last community transmission	2

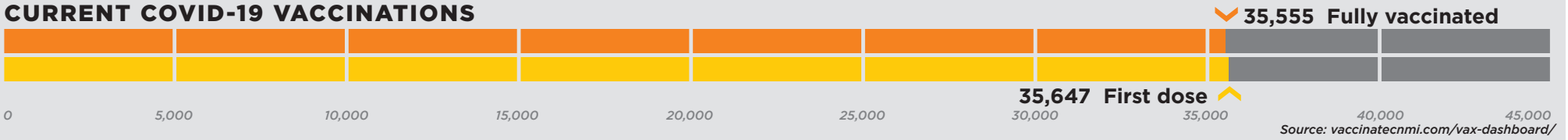
Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	30,744
Fully Vaccinated:	29,933
Moderna	
Initiated:	4,903
Fully Vaccinated:	4,738
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	884

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	18,410	97	18,507
Recovered	15,734	20	15,754
Active	2,408	97	2,505
Deaths	245	3	248

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	329	1	330
Traced via Travel Screening	256	0	256
Traced via Community Screening	73	1	74
Deaths	3	0	3

Source: Joint Information Center – Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS



Source: vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

INSIDE

BUSINESS
U.S. health officials on Tuesday gave the final signoff to Pfizer's kid-size COVID-19 shot.

PAGE 14

WORLD
All sides in Ethiopia's yearlong war in the Tigray region have committed "extreme brutality."

PAGE 16

LIFE & STYLE
Prince Andrew will probably be tried in a New York court late next year, says a judge.

PAGE 19

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

US Labor lauds NMI for proper implementation of PUA

In a conference call on Wednesday, Oct. 27, 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor Region 6 Office commended the CNMI Department of Labor for its proper implementation of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, citing seven best practices.

Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente and key staff within the CNMI Department of Labor's PUA program met virtually with U.S. Department of Labor–Employment & Training Administration representatives from the Region 6 office in San Francisco.

The meeting was held to discuss the culmination of a six-month long monitoring review (from April to September 2021) of the CNMI DOL's overall administration of PUA and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation programs in the Marianas.

The following categories were reviewed by the USDOL ETA:

- Initial Claims, Continued Claims, Adjudication
- Appeals
- Integrity
- Administrative, Operations, Reporting & Fiscal
- Employer Activities

The CNMI DOL PUA program was commended by the Region 6 office for initiating seven "Promising Practices" within its program operations—a feat separating the CNMI from other states and territories.

The following Best Practices were identified by U.S. DOL ETA:

1. The CNMI appeal process data reveals that the hearing and hearing-to-decision times were excellent.

2. The CNMI has demonstrated agility by manually reviewing cases docketed for appeals before the hearing date to determine if the issue at hand can be resolved and avoid the need for an appeal hearing.

3. The CNMI Education and Training Outreach Program to Employer and Claimants was a key component that provided clarifying information about the PUA program to employers and claimants.

4. CNMI has dedicated staff for claims services access. These dedicated resources provide accommodations for individuals including those with language barriers, limited internet access, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, literacy challenges and technology issues.

5. The CNMI created and employed a checklist for its PUA coordinators. This checklist covers eligibility issues, fact-finding, investigating claims and drafting determinations. This resource has proven helpful to staff and helps to ensure consistent experiences for claimants.

6. The CNMI enacted multiple identification verification processes, including the [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services - Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements] SAVE and cross-matching information with employers.

7. The CNMI DOL Benefits Payment Control Unit verifies business information with other government or local entities to detect benefits fraud not otherwise reported.

The CNMI DOL's efforts in administering the programs were highlighted by the Region 6 office since the PUA and FPUC programs were new programs that required a brand new and compatible online system.

In addition, the CNMI does not employ a regular unemployment insurance program like other states and was therefore unequipped with proper UI infrastructure to begin with, and staffing shortages were experienced by virtually all states and territories. Fraudulent claims activities were rampant; there were new legislation and therefore programs (e.g., stimulus care packages) were being effectuated simultaneously with the PUA/FPUC programs, and claims volumes were remarkably high because of the pandemic.

"As our federal colleagues have stated during our meeting, the CNMI is doing its job as best as it can, by following all federal guidelines. I owe the program's successes to the excellent working relationship we have developed over the past year with the Region 6 office personnel, the unwavering dedication of the CNMI DOL management team and Gov. Ralph [DLG] Torres' administration, the patience and understanding of our claimants and, most especially, the reliable and hardworking staff of the CNMI DOL PUA program. The program however, is far from over and we intend to do it justice by continuing to comply with federal and local laws and regulations so that the people of the Marianas who qualify for the programs, continue to get their much-needed benefits," said Benavente.

Torres said that the CNMI DOL has worked very hard under strict federal guidelines "and for them to receive praise from USDOL for their work is a big accomplishment. The work has not stopped to make sure PUA benefits go out to eligible recipients, and we are doing work with the private sector to create new jobs for our people through economic development in the coming months."

For further information or to follow up on the status of your claim, contact the PUA Communication Center at (670) 322-8870/8871/8872/887/8874, email info@puamarianas.com, or visit the PUA office at CNMI DOL building number 1334 on Capital Hill.

Additional CNMI DOL

See PUA on Page 4

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One positive COVID-19 case ID'd via contact tracing

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

One individual was identified and confirmed positive for COVID-19 via contact tracing on Nov. 2, bringing the CNMI's total to 330. In Guam, the Joint Information Center reported Wednesday the island's three most recent COVID-19-related deaths.

» **Guam logs 3 more COVID-related deaths**

In a news release last Wednesday, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. said the latest case has since been quarantined and is being monitored and that CHCC's Communicable Disease Investigation/ Inspection team has already initiated contact tracing for those who were in closest contact with the positive case. These efforts "will continue until all probable cases are identified and tested," CHCC added.

In the same release, CHCC reports that since Oct. 28, there have been 39 new cases. Of the 39, 31 were identified through contact tracing, seven through community-based testing, and one through travel testing. As for testing efforts, CHCC reports that a total of 427 COVID-19 tests were conducted on Nov. 2 and that the total comprises both travel and surveillance testing.

For individuals in the community experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, which include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, and new loss of taste or smell, CHCC asks those concerned to see their healthcare providers or call the CHCC Tele-Triage hotline at 670-233-2067.

In Guam, the JIC reported Wednesday the island's 243rd, 244th, and 245th COVID-19-related deaths. The JIC also reported Wednesday that there are 47 individuals in Guam hospitalized with COVID-19. Of the 47, 25 are vaccinated, 21 are unvaccinated, and one is ineligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

Guam's 243rd COVID-19-related death was a vaccinated 42-year-old female with underlying health conditions. She tested positive for COVID-19 on Nov. 1 and was pronounced dead on arrival at the U.S. Naval Hospital Guam on Nov. 1.

The 244th was a partially vaccinated 63-year-old male with underlying health conditions. He tested positive on Oct. 25 and was pronounced dead at the Guam Memorial Hospital on Nov. 2.

The 245th was a vaccinated 58-year-old male with underlying health conditions. He tested positive on Oct. 4 and was pronounced dead at GMH on Nov. 3.

In a statement she provided to the JIC, Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero said the Guam community "must not allow ourselves to forgo our personal responsibility in this fight."

"A loved one's death is a difficult time for us all and for those of us who have lost a loved one to this virus, you know how much more painful it is to lose them in a pandemic. To the families and friends of our most recent losses, [first gentleman] Jeff [Cook], [Guam Lt. Gov.] Josh [Tenorio], and I pour our hearts out to you. We will not forget the special people we have lost and to honor their memory, we must not allow ourselves to forgo our personal responsibility in this fight," she said.

Website streamlines all CNMI COVID-19 info

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force announced yesterday the launch of a new website, www.staysafecnmi.com, to streamline all COVID-19 information in the CNMI, including an updated health declaration form that all travelers are required to fill out 72 hours prior to arrival.

Site visitors can fill out travel entry requirements, register for COVID-19 vaccinations, and access their COVID-19 test results.

The new traveler declaration form on the website makes the process easier for CNMI visitors and returning residents to fill out CNMI travel entry requirements as prescribed by the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force.

The new website also includes a new CNMI informational portal that serves as a one-stop resource center for COVID-19 community updates and response. This includes testing information and a portal to the CNMI vaccination dashboard, which details ongoing vaccination efforts. It also connects directly with the CNMI Office of the Governor and CHCC websites and social media outlets to provide additional information for residents and visitors.

Visit www.staysafecnmi.com for everything regarding the ongoing CNMI COVID-19 response. ***(PR)***

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CPA to explore real-time communication tech for seaports

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Following her first experience as the Association of Pacific Ports conference chair, Commonwealth Ports Authority's Kimberlyn King-Hinds has brought new ideas to improve the CNMI's ports of entry and one of those ideas is a digital platform for real-time communication.

King-Hinds said one of the components of the conference was focused on learning about the latest technologies that will make ports more efficient. It was during this discussion when a digital platform for real-time communication was introduced.

"There's a move now to digitize and connect to a platform where everyone from the captain of the ship, the ports authority, customs, quarantine, [and] port operators are communicating in real-time when a vessel calls port," she said.

King-Hinds said CPA will explore the idea and possibly bring the technology to the CNMI's seaports as it promotes efficiency as well as improvement.

"It promotes efficiency and collects much needed data so that you can tell where the gaps are in the efficiency of the operations. I would like to explore bringing that technology to our seaports," she said.

In addition, King-Hinds said the biggest topic discussed during the three-day conference was the disruption in America's supply chain and the ongoing efforts to ease the bottleneck in West Coast ports and the impact it has on distribution across the supply chain.

"What was great about facilitating the meeting was to be a part of the conversation that was not focused on the problem. It was a conversation amongst stakeholders who included critical cross-intersectional public/quasi-public/governmental entities, and private industry partners about the role that they respectively played in the problem and how they can work together to address the problem. That's the kind of mindset that I want to cultivate at CPA and in my other areas of work," she said.

Overall, King-Hinds said, the experience was amazing. To top it off, she was able to share a little bit of the CNMI everyday as she greeted them with a warm *hafa adai* and *tirow*.

"It was an amazing experience. I got to meet presidents and CEOs of ports from Canada to San Diego, federal government partners from the Department of Transportation, Army Corp; experts in maritime; hear about the latest technology and services in the industry and build relationships with them over the course of the conference. I learned so much from engaging with them. Most of our problems can be solved if we are willing to listen to one another, understand where we are in the cog, and know how to get out of our own way so that we can resolve our challenges. That takes being able to have a civil discourse amongst stakeholders and I am proud to see that already happening here in the CNMI with the Governor's GCEA," she said.

"Whether we like the ideas or not, work is being done and public and private industries are collaborating to figure out how to get this economy going. There are a few ideas that I've brought back that I hope will be an added value to the ongoing conversation. With all that said, the coolest thing about the conference was that I was able to stand in front of people every single day and say *hafa adai, tirow*, and good morning," she added.

Commonwealth Ports Authority chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds chairs her first Association of Pacific Ports conference as its recently elected president.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CW-1

From Page 1

net. This allows DOL to keep track of how many CW-1 workers are currently working in the CNMI each fiscal year.

In 2020, the number of job openings that were advertised for CW-1 workers totaled 17,163. This went down to only 10,618 CW-1 jobs that were advertised covering the period from January 2021 to September 2021.

"That's a reduction of over 6,000 CW-1 openings. It's showing us that employers don't need that many employees. So that's a 38% reduction in job openings announced on our website from 2020 to 2021, as of Sept. 30," Benavente said.

She said the CNMI saw an even bigger drop in foreign workers when comparing the numbers to the year 2019 when the CNMI saw over 29,000 CW-1 jobs advertised on their website.

"When you look at 2019, there were a total of 29,992 CW-1-type job openings. That's a big drop for 2019 to 2020. That's a 42% drop of job openings for CW-1 workers from 29,000 to 17,000 in a year. Then, of course, in 2021, it dropped further with a 38% drop. It looks like it's going to remain at an all-time low as far as the number of job openings for CW-1 workers," she said.

It's not just the COVID-19 pandemic that's significantly cutting down the need for a CW-1 workforce. The Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act of 2018 that extended the CW-1 program through Dec. 31, 2029, established a CW-1 cap for the remainder of the program, with a plan to eventually phase out the CW-1 program in 2029 and encourage the CNMI to bolster recruitment of U.S. workers in the CNMI.

According to the website of U.S. Citizenship and immigration Services, the CW-1 cap for fiscal year 2021 that concluded last month was 15,000 but the CNMI did not reach the cap for 2021 as a result of the pandemic.

Benavente said that with the continuous drop in the CW-1 workforce, DOL is looking at training programs to get locals to fill the gaps.

"It's apparent we are trying to reopen our industries, tourism in particular. What we're trying to do is get our people into training programs to either upskill what they have, as far as current skills go, or learn a new trade altogether. If we don't have enough, then we just have to adapt. The CNMI is very good at that, we can adapt to an economic situation. The islands have always had good resilient people," she said.

TOGETHER

From Page 1

beautify our island, but there's more work to be done to realize Rota's full potential as a unique tourist destination, promote our rich culture and tradition, and preserve our strongest asset—Luta's pristine nature.

These big responsibilities fall into the hands of all of us, and I am pleased that once again Rota is stepping up as one community through the Marianas Village Pride Campaign. MVP's Village Flag Art Contest, Adopt-A-Median, Bus Stop Beautification, and Christmas Decoration contests kept our residents busy the past few weeks as we exchanged ideas and rediscovered the creative side in us.

I am proud to learn that students from Sinapalo Elementary School were among the first to express their interest in the Adopt-A-Median program. Let this be a challenge to the students of the Dr. Rita H. Inos Junior and Senior High School to start turning in their entries for the MVP Village Flag Art Contest and give Sinapalo and Songsong their true identity.

I am excited to see how our students will incorporate our culture and tradition in their designs, whether it be in the village flag or the bus stops beautification contests. Personally, I would like it to include cultural traditions and symbols, like *amening* our elders or highlighting our latte stones, because they depict who we are as people from the Marianas. Don't forget to represent our famous Luta wave, sweet potato, and ayuyu.

As for the Office of the Mayor, we are working on sprucing up the bus stops in our two villages and welcome help from private businesses, government agencies, and community members to provide our students with safer and better pick-up and drop-off areas on their way to and from their schools.

We are all stakeholders in this transformation campaign. The village facilities are for us to use and care for. Rota's destination sites also need our attention as we rely heavily on tourism-related revenue. At the same time, we have to maintain the natural beauty of our island to capture a growing market of travelers—the one catering to nature and ecotourism.

These can't be accomplished overnight, but we can take small steps to make our community more livable and vibrant, starting with our full support of the MVP campaign. We have the opportunity to turn things around for Rota and the entire Marianas, one village at a time.

For more information about the Marianas Village Pride Campaign, visit the GCEA website at cnmieconomy.com, engage on Facebook and Instagram (@cnmigov.economy), or contact them at gceacnmi@gmail.com.

CAMACHO

From Page 1

restraining order prohibits Camacho, three unnamed individuals, and Ignacio Concepcion from engaging in further physical harm, threats, disturbance, harassment, blocking, and verbal abuse against Koch and his family.

Camacho and the others named in the restraining order were instructed to return to court on Nov. 8, at 1:30pm.

According to the restraining order filed by attorney Charity Hodson on behalf of her client, Koch, his wife Magdalena, and his daughter Melanie sought the emergency order for protection because they claim they are victims of domestic violence by Camacho and Concepcion.

"They are terrified and fear for their personal safety and desire to prevent any further violence and harassment upon them," said Hodson.

Hodson asked the court to order the respondents, including Camacho, to stay at least 200 yards away from Koch and his family, and to order the respondents not to interfere with their access to Freedom Drive, China Town, the road that they share with Concepcion within the Concepcion family compound.

In addition, Hodson asked the court to order the respondent to stay at least 200 yards away from Koch and his wife in their place of work, specifically the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport and the DCCA Childcare Development Fund.

According to court documents, Koch alleges that two altercations on Oct. 29: one between him and Concepcion, and the other the alleged beating led by Camacho.

At around 4am that day, as Koch was driving home through Freedom Drive, he passed the home where Concepcion was living in. Concepcion allegedly approached Koch's company-issued vehicle with a machete, yelling "Stop disturbing my property. I'm going to call the police," before striking the left rear of the vehicle.

Camacho, for his part, allegedly called CPA that day to complain that Koch was abusing the company vehicle and was speeding up and down Freedom Drive.

Later that evening, at around 11pm, Koch and his daughter went for their evening walk along Freedom Drive and passed Concepcion's home.

Koch stated that Concepcion was at his house that evening, together Camacho and his two nephews. As Koch and his daughter were walking through the Concepcion compound, they passed right in front of Concepcion's home where Camacho allegedly came out with his other nephew.

When Koch told Camacho to stop calling him at work, that's when the men allegedly began to attack him.

Court documents state that the men continued to beat Koch even when he was already on the ground and only pulled back when his daughter begged them to stop.

Camacho allegedly knelt on Koch's neck while he was on the ground while the other two men hit him on the head.

In a separate interview with Camacho, the District 3 representative denied assaulting Koch, saying that Koch was the one who assaulted him and his two sons.

PUA

From Page 2

telephones:

- PUA Fraud Hotline 989-9095
- Benefits Payment Control Unit 322-9943/322-9944
- Administrative Services 664-3196/322-9947
- Employment Services 664-3190/322-9934/664-3298
- Enforcement Division 322-4365/323-9940
- Administrative Hearing Office 664-3290/664-3291
- OSHA 664-3156/664-3157
- WIOA 664-1708/664-1757 ***(PR)***

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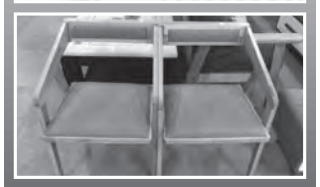

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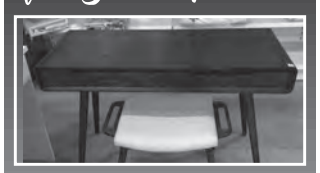

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'No evidence of accelerated COVID transmission so far'

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

So far, there is no indication that there has been an accelerated COVID-19 transmission within the community, despite a recent spike in the number of community transmissions, according to Stephanie Kern-Allely, who is regional communicable disease epidemiologist for the Pacific Island Health Officers Association.

"Our evidence of transmission does not indicate acceleration in terms of our curve. ...We have seen a lot of testing in the past couple of days [but] we have not been seeing our cases skyrocket. In fact, we're seeing fewer cases identified each day; our bulk of our cases were identified on the 28th of 29th [of October]," said Kern-Allely during a virtual news briefing Monday.

Kern-Allely said it is possible that the rate of spread has slowed down due to the CNMI's high vaccination numbers, which contributes to herd immunity, which in turn "can help break the chain of transmission."

Herd immunity refers to a form of indirect disease/infection protection that is achieved when a certain percentage of a population has become immune to an infection either through vaccination or past exposure to an infection/disease, reducing the chances of community spread and allowing those with no immunity to remain healthy without receiving a vaccine shot or being exposed to the disease.

"[There's] no evidence so far of accelerated transmission, likely tied to the high vaccination rate. With a large number of immunized people in the community, we're able to get close to herd immunity, which can help break the chain of transmission, so we're not seeing any evidence of accelerating transmission as of right now," she said.

According to the vaccinatecnmi.com dashboard, as of yesterday 35,555 individuals, or 83.9% of the CNMI's eligible population, are now fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Additionally, 35,647 individuals have at least received their first dose of a COVID-19, and 3,457 have received additional vaccine doses.

Participants in the virtual briefing on Monday included Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muña, Governor's COVID-19 Task Force chair Warren Villagomez, and community disease investigation inspector III Dwayne Davis.

Kern-Allely briefly shared during the briefing that she was deployed to the CNMI to assist and provide epidemiology services.

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Nam Dae Moon resto is now a ProaPerks partner

Nam Dae Moon Restaurant is now a proud NMC ProaPerks partner. More information about their special promotion for ProaPerks card holders can be found at marianas.edu/proaperks. NMC

Nam Dae Moon Restaurant is the latest company to sign on as a Northern Marianas College ProaPerks Partner, joining many other businesses and organizations that provide exclusive discounts and benefits for NMC students, employees, and alumni.

All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now receive a 5% discount on food and beverage in addition to the 20% local discount (items on Nam Dae Moon's premium menu are exempt from this promotion.)

Nam Dae Moon Restaurant joins the growing list of ProaPerks partners that include restaurants, car rentals, car dealers, specialty stores, general merchandise stores, car repair shops, hotels, appliance stores, etc.

NMC is in the introductory phase of rolling out the ProaPerks to alumni, students, and employees. For more information, visit marianas.edu/proaperks.

Companies and other interested organizations who would like to become part of the ProaPerks program and take advantage of the buying power of thousands of individuals that include Northern Marianas College alumni, students, and employees, can find more information by emailing proaperks@marianas.edu. ***(PR)***

DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

P. O. Box 501304, Saipan MP 96950, Gualo Rai Center, Saipan
TEL. NO. 664-8300 FAX NO. 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

As of November 5, 2021

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DCRM OFFICE:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. Commonwealth Ports Authority	10/22/2021 TMS-97-X-294-A1	Tinian International Airport Parking Lot Expansion	Tinian	Major Siting	Under Review
2. Lino M. Olopai	10/22/2021 SSCH-2021-048-A1	Construction of a Single Family Dwelling	Chalan Kanoa, Saipan	Shoreline, Coastal Hazard	Approved 11/02/2021
3. Saipan Horse Course, LLC	10/25/2021 SS-2022-002	Horse Tour Operation & Trail	Kagman, Saipan	Shoreline	Under Review*
4. National Parks Service	10/26/2021 SW-2022-003	Construction of Asphaltic Concrete Pavement & Sidewalks (Micro Beach Loop)	Garapan, Saipan	Wetland	Under Review*
5. Tropex Garden Co., LTD	10/29/2021 RPIm-2021-003	Security Fencing	West Harbor, Rota	Ports & Industrial	Approved* 11/02/2021

NMIAC §15-10-210 of the CRM Rules and Regulations requires all permit applications to be published in a newspaper for general circulation within the CNMI within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the DCRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the DCRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APCs) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local DCRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a DCRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the DCRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the DCRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the DCRM Regulations.

Mini-summit eyed for decentralizing some gov't services

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate and Tinian and Rota leaderships will hold a mini-summit to discuss a proposal to decentralize certain government services to the municipal governments of Rota and Tinian.

The Decentralization Mini-Summit 2021 will be held on Nov. 9, 2021, at 10am at the Tinian Western Lodge conference room in San Jose Tinian, and on Nov. 17, 2021, at 9:30am at the Office of the Mayor's conference hall at Antonio C. Atalig Memorial Library in Tatachog, Rota.

Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the summit is an attempt to identify ways to streamline government services on Tinian and Rota that includes government-funded infrastructure projects, government financial management system with the implementation of MUNIS system, and permitting for projects and other areas where the two islands can be allowed to oversee and manage on a day-to-day basis.

Hofschneider

The Senate president has invited Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to attend the mini-summit.

In his invitation letter Wednesday, Hofschneider said the Senate looks forward to meeting with Torres and the Rota and Tinian leadership in a unified effort to protect the economic interests of the Commonwealth.

He also invited Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig, along with Atalig's Division directors, to participate in this discussion.

The Senate president said the Senate participated last Oct. 21min a presentation on Tinian pertaining to the economic vision of the Commonwealth and the potential impacts investors may face in the Commonwealth, in particular for the Rota and Tinian municipalities.

Saipan Tribune learned that it was Allen Perez, chief executive officer of Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan, who did the presentation during a meeting with the Tinian and Rota leaderships.

In that meeting, Hofschneider said, there was a discussion on House Bill 22-70, which the Senate is currently considering for action on its bill calendar. H.B. 22-70 is the amendment to the Qualifying Certificate law here in the CNMI.

Hofschneider said they brought the bill to Tinian and they will be bringing it to Rota to give these two municipalities an opportunity to share their concerns and to suggest possible language that will benefit both islands in terms of incentives to convince potential businesses to operate on Tinian and/or Rota.

In his invitation to Torres, Hofschneider said concerns were brought to the Senate's attention regarding the decentralization of certain government functions to allow the municipality the opportunity to seamlessly carry out their day-to-day operations.

"It is for this reason that the Senate strongly supports this proposed initiative to continue the discussion of granting authorization to decentralize certain services to the municipal governments of Rota and Tinian," he said.

DROPOFF POINT CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Docomo Pacific is an official 2021 "Toys for Tots" partner this holiday season. Community members who would like to donate toys to the "Toys for Tots" program can drop off their donation at Docomo Pacific. The "Toys for Tots" program is a charitable initiative hosted by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve that provides toys to disadvantaged children during the Christmas holiday season. The program is spearheaded by the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce. Businesses who would like to participate in this program and host a toy collection box can email saipantoys4tots@gmail.com.

‘COVID-19 testing is not a preventative measure’

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Getting tested for COVID-19 does not mean you won’t get infected.

This was made clear during a virtual news briefing Wednesday, with both Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muña and regional epidemiologist Stephanie Kern-Allely emphasizing that COVID-19 testing is not a preventative measure, adding that CHCC has been concerned with individuals not staying put and quarantining while waiting for their test results.

Muña said that lining up for community-based testing followed by going out and about in the community before learning one’s test results “defeats the purpose” of getting tested, and said that it is important that those concerned call contact tracers.

“What really concerns us is if you’re going to go get tested, and then you go out and not quarantine, it basically defeats the purpose. ...It is really important to know that if you feel that you’re a contact, it’s best to contact the contact tracers directly and let them know [that you feel that] you’re connected. ...They can arrange for the testing as well so that you don’t have to go through the line of the [community-based testing],” said Muña.

Those with concerns can contact the contact tracing tip lines at 670-286-1722; 670-285-1857; 670-286-1729; or 670-287-7572.

Muña assured, though, that getting tested does help, and greatly supports CHCC’s role in containing COVID-19 in the CNMI. Again, though, she asks those who have gotten tested to stay put and wait for their test results. “It does help to find those that really do have exposure and don’t know about it. It’s good to do it but, again, the concern we have is what they do after,” Muña added.

Kern-Allely, who is a regional communicable disease epidemiologist for the Pacific Island Health Officers Association, said it is important to know that simply getting tested for COVID-19 in itself is not a preventative measure and that getting tested is not a guarantee that you are not at risk of spreading COVID-19 to others.

Actual preventative measures and means of reducing the risk of spread to others, however, is getting vaccinated and receiving booster shots if eligible, and practicing the 3 W’s: wash your hands, watch your distance, and wear a face covering, she added.

Kern-Allely also said that getting tested “at this point in time is sort of a snapshot,” and helps CHCC identify and understand community transmission of COVID-19, but again reiterated that testing is not prevention.

“I just want to reiterate that testing is not a prevention strategy. Being tested isn’t going to prevent you from spreading it to your family, or in a gathering. ...Testing at this point in time is sort of a snapshot; it can help us identify transmission, and help us break those chains of transmission,” said Kern-Allely. “But it’s still not prevention, and we really need to focus on ensuring that we’re preventing those chains of transmission from continuing by vaccination and of course, our three W’s [and] emphasizing that those are prevention methods. …It’s really [through practicing the 3 W’s and getting vaccinated] that we can stop...transmitting [COVID-19] to our loved ones, friends, and families.”

JRM lifts mask restrictions for the fully vaccinated

ASAN, Guam—Joint Region Marianas has updated its COVID-19 mask mandate policy applicable to all Department of Defense installations in Guam, and is no longer requiring that masks be worn on base by military and civilian personnel and visitors who are fully vaccinated.

The updated mask policy takes effect immediately.

“In light of improving public health conditions, fully vaccinated individuals are not required to wear masks on base,” said JRM Commander Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson. “The use of masks remains mandatory for individuals who are not fully vaccinated or who are unable to be fully vaccinated.” ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP22-CHCC/CGC-AS-006
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 16, 2021 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

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INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
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ITB22-CHCC/MICAH-HOME-005
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 16, 2021 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
MVA-RFP-22-2046
For: Marianas Visitors Authority
TOURISM RESUMPTION INVESTMENT PLAN (TRIP)
HYBRID QUARANTINE FACILITY

Submission /Closing Date: November 15, 2021 Time: 10:00AM (ChST)
Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority
Attn: Procurement Office
San Jose Professional Building
Beach Rd., San Jose
P.O. Box 500861, Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work on or after **November 01, 2021** at the **Marianas Visitors Authority Office, San Jose Professional Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan**, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

/s/ Ellsbeth Viola Alepuyo
Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

/s/ Priscilla M. Iakopo
Managing Director, MVA

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH 2021

Across our islands and beyond, we got together with the goal to end domestic violence during October. Even through globally challenging times, your partnership and support was still there and spoke volumes to our community, as well as to victims and survivors of domestic violence.

Thank you for embracing Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) as an opportunity to advocate for a safer home and community especially for victims and survivors who need our love and support. It truly takes all of us, all of our voices, together to end the silence of domestic violence.

Our most heartfelt thanks goes out to survivors, their families, and the families of those who lost someone to domestic violence. Your extraordinary courage in facing each day and hope that we can, as a community, break the cycle of violence is inspiring. It is the motivation for this movement.

Thank you again to the first responders, service providers, and advocates who continue to work diligently to serve victims, survivors, and their families. Last but not least, we at the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to all the following volunteers, donors, and partners for the tremendous support during DVAM.

Although DVAM has ended, much remains to be done. We hope everyone will continue to speak out on violence, work to create a safer CNMI, and empower each other to keep HEALING FORWARD.

THANK YOU

Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghilisow Reemi

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres
Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios
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Youth Advisory Panel, Rota

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Marvin Tamangided
Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Aguigan
Project Haligi Aware

Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Information on Afghan debacle must be declassified so lessons can be learned

Even as the Biden administration tries to close the book on U.S. misadventures in Afghanistan, it still has yet to open the books on embarrassing information that could expose how badly the 20-year stabilization effort was mismanaged.

Classified information was made available to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction as he prepared his most recent report on waste, fraud and abuse in the war and rebuilding effort.

But the American public and some members of Congress still aren't allowed to see it. President Joe Biden must honor pledges for full transparency and declassify this information immediately.

Although Biden presided over a disastrous, rushed withdrawal in August, the vast bulk of the war occurred under his three predecessors. Each committed blunders that deserve a full public airing to avoid repeating their mistakes in the future.

Special Inspector General John Sopko has monitored these failings since 2012, and anyone who has bothered to read his office's 53 quarterly reports would probably agree with his assessment that the collapse of the Afghan security forces and rapid Taliban takeover was predictable.

"We really need to get information declassified. There is a lot of information that was classified or withheld from the American people over the years, particularly since 2015, to protect the Afghan government from embarrassment," Sopko told National Public Radio on Friday.

Since the Taliban is now in power, there's no one left in Afghanistan's government to be embarrassed if this information were released. It's not clear why the information was classified to begin with, since public embarrassment isn't one of the standards by which the U.S. government labels national security information secret.

"A recent series of requests by the State Department to remove from public view wholesale parts of [the special inspector general's] reports is a cautionary tale of why oversight agencies need to question an all-too-common impulse to remove information from Congressional and public view with little to no basis in fact or law," Sopko's latest report states.

Aside from the massive expenditures to support the U.S. military's presence since 2001, U.S. taxpayers funded $145 billion trying to rebuild Afghanistan, train its security forces and strengthen its civilian government institutions, economy, and civil society, Sopko says in the 53rd quarterly report to Congress, released last week.

The Taliban takeover wiped out virtually everything the United States spent two decades trying to build.

"These are sobering facts, and we owe all who served in Afghanistan—as well as the American taxpayer—an accurate accounting of why the 20-year U.S. mission in Afghanistan ended so abruptly, with so little to show for it," the report states.

For the federal government, Congress and taxpayers to learn from this experience, they need to have access to information arbitrarily kept from public view by an overly protective State Department.

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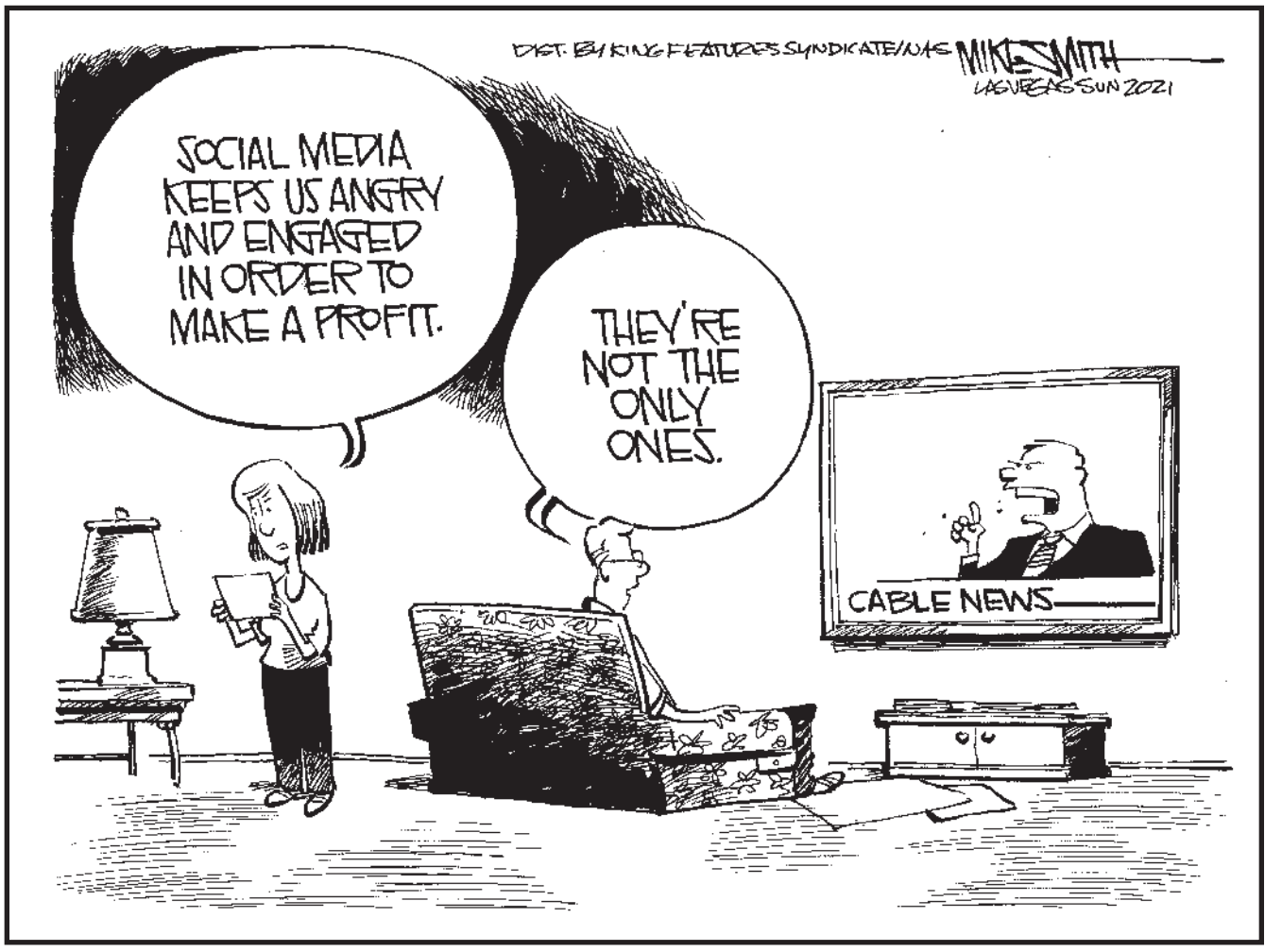
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CABLE NEWS

Mark Zuckerberg takes a page from Elon Musk's book

By PARMY OLSON
Bloomberg Opinion

Parmy Olson is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist covering technology. She previously reported for the* Wall Street Journal *and* Forbes *and is the author of* We Are Anonymous.

It seems to be a rite of passage that as technology billionaires get older, they spend more time chasing dreams they might have fantasized about as kids. There's Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos with their rockets, and now Mark Zuckerberg, aged 37, with his plans to build an alternate digital reality known as the metaverse.

Last week, Zuckerberg announced that Facebook Inc. was changing its name to Meta Platforms Inc., to reflect its focus on a new virtual- and augmented-reality platform "for connecting people." It looked at first like the CEO was distancing himself from the company's problems, but that is only part of the story. He also seems to be following in Musk's footsteps, attempting, in his own way, to become a tech futurist with grandiose plans to change humanity. That may ultimately make Zuckerberg the clearest winner from Facebook's pivot.

I am skeptical about the metaverse, and not just because of Facebook's negligence of user safety.

History is littered with tech companies that, despite their roots in innovation, couldn't pivot to new platforms. Take Nokia Corporation. Back in 2007 it had the lion's share of global revenue from mobile phones. Then it tried building a new platform for apps and failed to compete with Apple Inc.'s iPhones and Google's Android operating system. Within six years it went from a market valuation of $150 billion to being bought by Microsoft Corp., in 2013, for $7.2 billion.

Arm Holdings is another example. Its mobile chip designs indirectly power nearly all of the world's smartphones, giving it a lucrative passive income in license fees. Several years ago Arm steered into the more futuristic world of the Internet of Things, building software to connect cars, doorbells, washing machines and more. Believing that goal would pay off, SoftBank Group Corp. bought Arm for $32 billion in 2016. But the IoT business stagnated, and in 2020 Arm said it would spin the unit off and refocus on chip licensing.

Even Google's restructuring as Alphabet Inc. has faltered in new territory, with some of the conglomerate's "bets" mostly draining money, even in promising areas like pharmaceuticals. A project with Novartis International AG to track diabetes through contact lenses was shut down in 2018, while a similar partnership with Sanofi fizzled in 2019. Six years on from seeking new directions, Alphabet still makes more than 80% of its revenue from advertising.

Meta Platforms will also struggle to make money from anything other than selling ads on Facebook and Instagram. So successful and entrenched is that core business that Facebook has yet to make money from another platform it has already owned for seven years: WhatsApp. The chat app, which Zuckerberg bought for $19 billion in 2014, has approximately 2 billion monthly users but generates nominal revenues, even after yearslong efforts to lay the groundwork for ads and business messaging.

Facebook is meanwhile playing catch-up on virtual reality with Roblox Corp. and Valve Corporation's SteamVR, while VR products coming from Apple, Google and Microsoft will be tough competitors.

And the company has struggled to turn innovative ideas into products in the past. Among the misfires: the much-hyped mobile platform Home, which closed in 2013, and Snapchat competitors Poke and Slingshot (2014 and 2015). Facebook also couldn't build a voice assistant for its video-calling device Portal (awkwardly using Amazon Inc.'s Alexa instead), because its engineers grappled with confusing priorities, some of them told me in 2018.

So where does that leave the metaverse? With billions of dollars, Zuckerberg will certainly build something, but its financial success is dubious. The clearer winner is Zuckerberg himself. He can walk away from being the suit-and-tie-wearing executive answering questions about harmful content on Facebook in Congress, and onto the public stage unveiling all the new ways that Meta is making science fiction real.

In that sense, Zuckerberg has taken a step towards becoming more like Tesla Inc.'s Musk, making a visionary bet just as Musk did with his predictions about the shift to electric cars. Despite noted tensions between the two founders, the former has quietly tried to emulate the latter. A former Facebook employee tells me that several years ago Zuckerberg started posting more frequently to his own profile because he wanted to build a larger fanbase like Musk's. He increased his following by hiring professional photographers to document his work and home life, among other strategies.

But neither history nor his followers will remember Zuckerberg as the grandfather of virtual reality if he continues to neglect the toxic clean-up needed on Facebook. The financial and regulatory pressure coming toward Meta is real. Over time, that dream of being an icon will start to unravel.

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Why I am going to Glasgow, Scotland

By SHEILA BABAUTA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rep. Sheila Babauta (D-Saipan) is a member of the 22nd Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands House of Representatives and chairwoman of the Natural Resources Committee.

"Raise awareness, gather allies, and unify your voice."

President Barack Obama pointed me in that direction when I asked him a question about the military presence in the Pacific islands. Our brief exchange occurred in 2019—I stood among an audience of global leaders, he responded from the stage—at the convening of the Obama Leaders: Asia Pacific cohort in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

For the past two years, I have been moving in that direction, taking his advice to heart, and it has brought me to Glasgow, Scotland for the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference, or COP26.

Raise awareness. I was born and raised in a small village on an island called Saipan, next to the Marianas Trench. For over 500 years, my home, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and my culture, have adapted to the impacts of colonialism and militarization. But not many are aware of that—even I did not fully understand how deeply ingrained these issues were to our community until my first year in public office.

My beautiful island faced the wrath of two tropical super typhoons fueled by the fossil fuel emissions warming our atmosphere. In 2018, only three years after Typhoon Soudelor, Super Typhoon Yutu flattened my island with sustained winds of over 290 kilometers per hour, the strongest storm to hit United States soil since 1935. Experts say the cyclones will only get stronger, adding to the already receding shorelines and bleached coral reefs. And with the increased frequency of powerful storms, we are left begging for assistance from the same nations driving the impacts of climate change.

We all need to be aware of the apparent truth that climate change is not something that will happen in the future. It is here and it is now. We are already climate refugees. Climate change is here today, and it has been knocking down our doors and washing away our shores for years.

Pacific Islanders contribute very little to the crisis, yet are at the frontlines of dealing with the devastating effects of a warming planet caused by climate colonialism. We have suffered five centuries of imperialism and genocide. This climate colonial violence is still ongoing as rapid and intensive militarization of our homeland takes root, causing destruction and continued theft of our natural resources.

During my first year in office, at the age of 30, I attended a public meeting hosted by the United States Navy. The military plans proposed were destructive and alarming. They described using bombs, mortars, live fire training, taking permits, combat readiness, national security, amphibious assaults, attack helicopters and warplanes, and ship-to-shore naval bombardment. These plans sounded big and scary not only because they would kill native wildlife and destroy native forests, coral reefs, and farmland, but because I knew it could very well become our new reality.

That will not happen as long as we are locally and globally aware of the intersection of militarization, colonialism, and climate change in the Marianas. We have been adapting to our changing environment for centuries and we have knowledge to share.

Gather Allies. While in Glasgow, I aim to share our stories and experiences to connect with allies and learn from one another. As a Climate Justice Weaver with the Micronesian Climate Change Alliance, I have been invited to speak on a number of panels at COP26. I am particularly interested in speaking with representatives from the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and Guam. Our brothers and sisters from these islands have suffered alongside the CNMI by subjugation for atomic bomb testing, radiation poisoning, marine-life destruction, unsustainable development, and the degradation of our coral reefs and lagoons.

Altogether, my brothers and sisters across the Pacific hold the keys to solve the problem of militarization, climate change, and climate colonialism. We are not passive victims. We hold solutions that are grounded in our millennia of living as kin to the land and ocean.

Many communities in the Pacific are implementing climate-smart agriculture and are revitalizing traditional practices. Examples of this are expanding mangrove forests, planting drought-tolerant species and utilizing the benefits of nature, such as using seaweed as soil and planting vegetation to reduce flooding and erosion along coastlines. There are some communities combining these traditional practices with new scientific advancements such as the development of heat and salt-tolerant and community-led GIS mapping of breadfruit trees vulnerable to climate impacts in the Marshall Islands. Communities are revitalizing traditional water wells in Pohnpei, establishing new protected areas, and improving the management of existing protected areas in Chuuk and Yap in the FSM. climate-smart development plans that incorporate ecosystem-based adaptation are being implemented all over the Republic of Palau.

We have to unite in this fight.

Unify Your Voice.

I will also be meeting with peace and climate justice leaders from across the world who are demanding that military exemptions to the climate accords end. War causes warming, the world's war industry is the single largest consumer of fossil fuels and single largest producer of pollutants. Holding these entities accountable to take climate action is vital in global effort to keep to 1.5-degree Celsius warming threshold. Pacific people's survival depends on this target and we all need unify and raise our voices so world leaders can make bold commitments ensuring the safety of our futures.

The journey to COP26 in Scotland, United Kingdom is no easy feat. Crossing the Pacific Ocean, the entire North American continent, and the Atlantic Ocean, brings me a long way from our warm island home, and COVID-19 adds just one more layer of complexity on this international journey. The long days of traveling and cold temperatures do not deter me from ensuring our islands and our futures are strongly advocated for.

Even with all these obstacles before me, I am on a mission and I have the people of the Mariana Islands with me in spirit.

References: Mcleod et al. (2019). Lessons From the Pacific Islands—Adapting to Climate Change by Supporting Social and Ecological Resilience. https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2019.00289/full.

Our nation is at more risk than our species

By JOHN M. CRISP
Tribune News Service

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, lives in Georgetown, Texas, and can be reached at jcrispcolumns@gmail.com.

Which should we be most worried about, our species or our nation?

First, our species: Our world's most prominent leaders, as well as 20,000 diplomats, executives and activists, are convening in Glasgow this week to talk about the threat that climate change presents for our species. Good for them.

But climate activist Greta Thunberg recently summed up 30 years of talking about climate change this way: "Blah, blah, blah."

There is reason to believe that her cynicism is justified. Despite considerable alarmist handwringing and well-intentioned rhetoric, we've actually done very little to slow climate change. In fact, the planet's warming has developed its own apparently unstoppable momentum. The prospects are dim.

But then there's our nation to worry about. We could describe our current political dysfunction in various ways, but last week a very ominous number emerged from a recent Politico and Morning Consult poll. Two thousand registered voters responded to this question: "Do you think the results of the 2020 presidential election should be overturned?"

Thirty-five percent said "Yes, definitely" or "Yes, probably." Among Republicans, 60 percent said the same.

The indication that one in three Americans believes that Biden's presidency is illegitimate and that he should be replaced by former president Donald Trump is not as alarming as the fact that this position is based on essentially no evidence.

When it comes to election skepticism, the burden of proof is on the doubters and deniers, and in the case of the 2020 election they simply have not been able to develop any evidence that rises above anecdote, assertion and innuendo.

On the contrary, a wide array of academics, politicians, historians, state officials and people who study such things have found that no credible evidence of election fraud exists and certainly not any level that would affect the outcome of the 2020 election. Election results have been challenged in the courts more than 60 times, and judges appointed by both Republicans and Democrats have found no merits in the suits.

Republicans as prominent as Trump's former attorney general William Barr have asserted that the election was secure and honest. Shortly after the election, Barr told the Associated Press that U.S. attorneys and F.B.I. agents had investigated complaints and "we have not seen fraud on a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election."

Yet the lie persists and has been the driving force behind unnecessary audits, threats against election officials and a slew of new laws that are designed to make voting harder rather than easier.

Where does the lie get its strength? As far as I can tell, it depends largely on the idea that the Constitution grants the power to control elections to state legislatures and, thus, Republicans contend, changes in election procedures have to be approved by the legislatures themselves.

The reductio ad absurdum suggests that the relocation of a polling station by a local election official would require the convocation of the legislature to approve it. In practical terms, Republicans are applying this rationale to cast doubt on voting practices that encouraged record turnout in the middle of a pandemic. And Republicans are deeply threatened by record turnout.

This specious rationale serves as the basis for most of the misguided skepticism about the election, despite the fact that even if the rationale were accurate, it doesn't indicate that voter fraud actually occurred or that one side would benefit over the other.

Yet the Republicans have managed to beguile a significant portion of our nation into believing that the election was fraudulent. And without faith in our elections, we do not have a democracy.

So, which is the greater threat, climate change or this Republican lie? I predict our species will survive climate change, even if the world turns into the place that philosopher Thomas Hobbes described in 1651: "No arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."

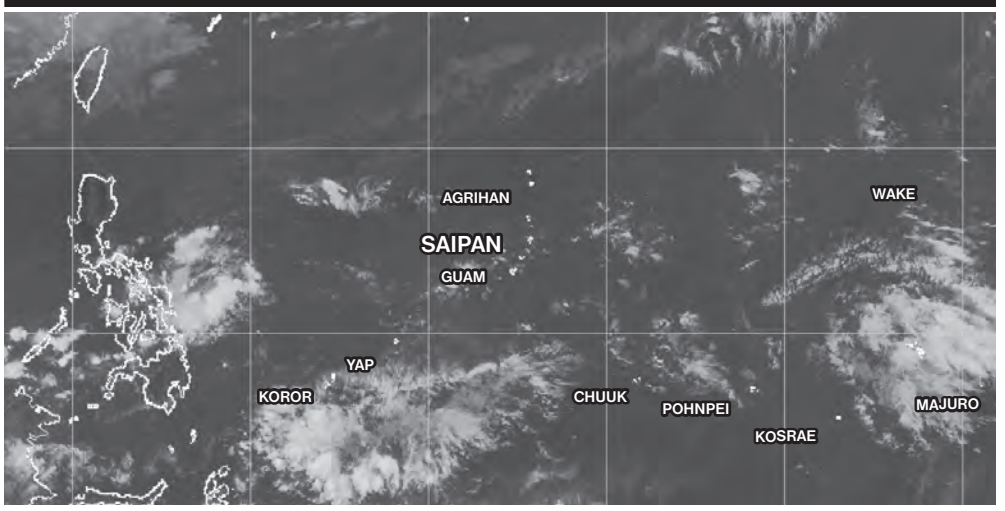
But can our democracy survive this systematic and intentional erosion of faith in our elections? No.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms through mid morning, becoming partly cloudy with isolated showers by afternoon.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds around 10 mph during the day, becoming light after sunset.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:37 AM, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Isolated showers continue to cross Guam, Saipan, and their coastal waters this morning, with a somewhat greater coverage across Tinian, Rota, and their coastal waters. This is ahead of an approaching surface trough that`s currently located about 250 miles east of the Marianas. The latest observations at the Ipan Buoy show seas running near 4 feet from the east-northeast, and a northeast swell slight over 2 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:14 AM	5:46 PM
Saturday	6:14 AM	5:46 PM
Sunday	6:15 AM	5:45 PM
Monday	6:15 AM	5:45 PM
Tuesday	6:15 AM	5:45 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	6:16 AM	6:08 PM	-
Saturday	7:20 AM	7:00 PM	-
Sunday	8:27 AM	7:58 PM	-
Monday	9:34 AM	9:01 PM	-
Tuesday	10:38 AM	10:04 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	66° / 61°
Beijing	Sunny	64° / 37°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	79° / 72°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	83° / 72°
London	Sunny	52° / 43°
Los Angeles	Showers	63° / 55°
Manila	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
Melbourne	Cloudy	57° / 48°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	81° / 74°
New York	Rain	72° / 50°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	72° / 59°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	52° / 36°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	66° / 55°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	61° / 48°
Salem	Sunny	83° / 60°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	58° / 44°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	64° / 48°
Tokyo	Sunny	68° / 55°
Washington, DC	Rain	75° / 53°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:33 AM	Low Tide	-0.24
8:02 AM	High Tide	1.93
1:47 PM	Low Tide	0.73
7:16 PM	High Tide	2.00

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 28, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	6
TW9308	3:20PM	8:00PM	4
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	6

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA116	5:30am	6:16am	2, 4, 6
UA174	8:00am	8:46am	1, 3, 5, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	2, 5
UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 6, 7 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	6
TW9307	10:00AM	2:20PM	4

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

IPI satisfies judgment in case filed by law firm

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has satisfied the judgment against it in the case filed by the law firm of Banes Horey Berman & Miller.

The law firm filed an acknowledgement of satisfaction of judgment with the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Tuesday after the check IPI tendered cleared the bank.

Richard Miller, who represents the law firm in this case, said that IPI's check cleared the bank last month.

"[Plaintiffs] acknowledge full and complete satisfaction of the judgment in this matter, including all attorney fees and costs, and suggests that entry of satisfaction of the judgment be entered on the docket and the case closed," Miller said.

According to court documents, IPI owed the law firm over $120,000 in attorney's fees and expenses on all matters for which the law firm performed legal services for the casino investor.

On Feb. 10, 2021, the U.S. District Court for the NMI entered judgment against IPI in the amount of $114,311.38, including prejudgment interest at a rate of 9%, plus post-judgment interest at a rate of 0.07% per annum, along with costs.

On March 26, 2021, the court ordered IPI to pay the plaintiff reasonable attorney's fees and costs of bringing the enforcement action.

On Sept. 24, 2021, the court issued an order to show cause why IPI should not be held in contempt for failure to make payment.

On Oct. 7, 2021 the court found IPI was in contempt and granted the plaintiff attorney's fees and costs.

Sometime after, the law firm and IPI agreed to compromise on the remaining amounts due on the judgment, including attorney's fees and costs, for the sum of $67,000.

On Oct. 20, 2021, IPI gave the law firm a personal check in the amount of $67,000 and the check cleared later that same day.

Miller and IPI attorney Stephen Nutting, through a stipulation, have asked the federal court to discharge the order to show cause.

'Taxpayer information is fully protected'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Division of Revenue and Taxation director Tracy Norita said Friday that taxpayer information at their office is absolutely fully protected from breach due to upgrades in the government's information technology system.

In response to a question if the Revenue and Taxation office is fully protected considering that the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s system was recently breached, Norita said they are under the Office of Information Technology and because of the support of Finance Secretary David DLG. Atalig and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, they've made a lot of security upgrades in that department.

Atalig

"So I know that we have not been breached, and that our taxpayer information is absolutely secured," she said.

Atalig acknowledged that the CNMI is not immune to cyberattacks and that there are indeed instances when cyber ransomware try to breach the CNMI's systems but Atalig said that what they've done is invest heavily in securing all of the government's servers and computers.

He said that is just part of the movement they have with centralizing Information Technology and the creation of the Office of Information Technology under the Department of Finance.

Atalig said they're having a lot of challenges also with the new system in getting people access and to ensure they won't alter security protocols just to access the system.

"And that's why as we talk about our system, the main driver is securing our taxpayer data, as well as all our financial information for the Commonwealth government," Atalig said.

In an executive order issued last April 27, Torres directed Atalig to create the Office of Information Technology, with the chief information officer serving under and reporting directly to Atalig.

Torres said the lack of a centrally coordinated efforts on unified software platforms has placed the government at great risk of cyberattacks.

PACIFIC MARINE ENTERPRISES INC.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

ACCOUNTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION: Assumes entire performance and activities of the accounting functions; Provides overall planning, direction, supervision, coordination, and control of all accounting works; Reviews, formulates, recommends, and implements accounting policies, systems, and procedures of the company; Maintains accuracy of general revenue and expenditure ledgers and subsidiary financial systems; Reconciles financial ledgers and records; Prepares the following financial statements and reports following generally accepted accounting principles and statutory basis: (A) Balance Sheet; (B) Statement of Income and Surplus; (C) Statement of Cash Flows; and (D) Annual Statements; Prepares general and subsidiary ledgers and supporting schedules; Verifies all journals, check and account payable vouchers and checks propriety of entries and adequacy of supporting documents; Researches and resolves discrepancies; Reviews aging of accounts payables and receivables; Reviews and audits all account payables, purchase orders, cash receipts, payrolls, utility billings, and other accounting records and transactions; Ensures money is posted to correct accounts and that all accounts balance; Provides assistance in the development of budgets for various projects and create a variety of spreadsheets, documents, and graphs for that purpose, if necessary; Performs treasury functions such as the matching and timing of fund sources with disbursements and the implementation of budget; Prepares bank reconciliations and related journal entries for a variety of accounts, including, but not limited to, debt and loan servicing; Prepares a variety of monthly, periodic, and annual financial and statistical reports and account summaries; Prepares and files annual accountant's reports; Assists in the preparation of year-end closing and accompanying financial reports; Performs grant accounting work related to federal, state or grant agency funding, if any, for projects undertaken by the company; Maintains records for audit purposes; Maintains and tracks fixed assets inventory control records for the company; Participates in year-end audits; Compiles and prepares supporting schedules, work papers, and financial reports as requested by auditors; Prepares property tax remittances for payment; Provides responsible staff assistance to management staff; Provides and interprets fundamental financial data and information to management; Performs special department projects as may be assigned; Analyzes complex financial transactions and formulas; Solves practical problems and deals with a variety of complex variables in situations where only limited standardization exists; Interprets and applies applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes and regulations; Maintains efficient and effective financial systems and procedures; Examines and verifies financial documents and reports; Serves as company liaison to various government agencies and private entities within the area of responsibility; and Performs related duties as may be assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- **EDUCATION:** Must have a Bachelor's Degree in Accountancy
- **EXPERIENCE:** Must have at least 60 months of relevant work experience as an Accountant
- **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:** Must have knowledge and experience in accounting software; Must be computer literate; and Must possess excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- **JOB SITE:** Chalan Pale Arnold Paipai Dr., As Mahetog, Tanapag, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

HOW TO APPLY: Submit or mail resume and/or application letter to:

DANILYN DAVID VARELA
General Manager
PACIFIC MARINE ENTERPRISES, INC.
Office Address: Chalan Pale Arnold Paipai Dr., As Mahetog, Tanapag Saipan,
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Mailing Address: PMB 181, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950 Email Address: danilynvarela@outlook.com
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SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
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ATTORNEY FOR PETITIONERS

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Adoption of L.I.O.L., a minor child,) CIVIL ACTION NO. 21-0405-FCD

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Mariama Faith Masga Nakazato and Marwin Leemarvin have filed a Petition for the Adoption and Change of Name of L.I.O.L., a minor child, and that the said Petition will be heard by the Court on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

DATED: October 30, 2021

MICHAEL E. WHITE, ESQ., F-0122
Attorney for Petitioners

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW22-ITB No.: 42200014

SUBMISSION DATE: November 30, 2021 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Renovation of Government House No. 1236, Capitol Hill, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **October 29, 2021** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars ($100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at DPW Technical Services Division required for each set.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **November 16, 2021**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **November 23, 2021** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ANTHONY A. CAMACHO
Acting Secretary, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
Acting Director, Division of Procurement Services

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-22-003

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BUCKET TRUCKS AND TRUCK CRANE

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the supply and delivery of six bucket trucks and one 30ton truck crane for the CUC Power Distribution in Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded from the United states Department of the Interior (USDOIA).

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-22-003, Supply and Delivery of Bucket Trucks and Truck Crane)"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on December 6, 2021** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on November 12, 2021**, to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Lee Lieto, CUC Power Division Manager via email lee.lieto@cucgov.org, and Adrian Reyes, CUC Power Division Engineer at email adrian.reyes@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Business

US gives final clearance to COVID-19 shots for kids 5 to 11

By LAURAN NEERGAARD and MIKE STOBBE
AP MEDICAL WRITERS

U.S. health officials on Tuesday gave the final signoff to Pfizer's kid-size COVID-19 shot, a milestone that opens a major expansion of the nation's vaccination campaign to children as young as 5.

The Food and Drug Administration already authorized the shots for children ages 5 to 11 —doses just a third of the amount given to teens and adults. But the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention formally recommends who should receive FDA-cleared vaccines.

The announcement by CDC director Dr. Rochelle Walensky came only hours after an advisory panel unanimously decided Pfizer's shots should be opened to the 28 million youngsters in that age group.

The decision marks the first opportunity for Americans under 12 to get the powerful protection of any COVID-19 vaccine.

"As a mom, I encourage parents with questions to talk to their pediatrician, school nurse or local pharmacist to learn more about the vaccine and the importance of getting their children vaccinated," Walensky said Tuesday night, in a statement.

In remarks earlier in the day, she said while the risk of severe disease and death is lower in young children than adults, it is real —and that COVID-19 has had a profound social, mental health and educational impact on youngsters, including widening disparities in learning.

"There are children in the second grade who have never experienced a normal school year," Walensky said. "Pediatric vaccination has the power to help us change all of that."

President Joe Biden called the decision "a turning point."

"It will allow parents to end months of anxious worrying about their kids, and reduce the extent to which children spread the virus to others," he said in a statement. "It is a major step forward for our nation in our fight to defeat the virus."

The American Academy of Pediatrics welcomed the decision as its members get ready to start the first injections into little arms, which the CDC said could begin "as soon as possible." The 5- to 11-year-olds will receive two low doses, three weeks apart, of the vaccine made by Pfizer and its partner BioNTech -- the same schedule as everyone else, but using a smaller needle.

Pfizer over the weekend began shipping millions of the pediatric shots to states, doctors' offices and pharmacies —in orange caps, to avoid

This October 2021, photo provided by Pfizer shows kid-size doses of its COVID-19 vaccine in Puurs, Belgium. PFIZER VIA AP, FILE

mix-ups with purple-capped vials of adult vaccine.

Many parents have clamored for vaccine protection for youngsters so they can resume normal childhood activities without risking their own health —or fear bringing the virus home to a more vulnerable family member. But CDC's advisers said they recognize many parents also have questions, and may be fearful of the vaccine because of rampant misinformation.

Members of the advisory panel said they want parents to ask about the shots —and understand that they're far better than gambling that their child will escape a serious coronavirus infection. As for safety, more than 106 million Americans have safely gotten two doses of Pfizer's full-strength shots —including more than 7 million 12- to 15-year-olds.

"I have vaccinated my kids," said CDC adviser Dr. Helen Keipp Talbot of Vanderbilt University, saying she wouldn't recommend something for other families unless she was comfortable with it for her own. "We have seen the devastation of this disease."

In the U.S., there have been more than 8,300 coronavirus-related hospitalizations of kids ages 5 to 11, about a third requiring intensive care, according to government data. The CDC has recorded at least 94 deaths in that age group, with additional reports under investigation.

And while the U.S. has seen a recent downturn in COVID-19 cases, experts are worried about another uptick with holiday travel and as winter sends more activity indoors where it's easier for the coronavirus to spread.

Pfizer's study of 2,268 youngsters found the kid-size vaccine is nearly 91% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 -- based on 16 diagnoses among kids given dummy shots compared to just three who got the real vaccination.

The FDA examined more children, a total of 3,100 who were vaccinated, in concluding the shots are safe. The younger children experienced similar or fewer reactions -- such as sore arms, fever or achiness -- than teens or young adults get after larger doses.

That study wasn't large enough to detect any extremely rare side effects, such as the heart inflammation that occasionally occurs after the second full-strength dose, mostly in young men and teen boys. Regulators ultimately decided the benefits from vaccination outweigh the potential that younger kids getting a smaller dose also might experience that rare risk.

Some of CDC's advisers said for some parents, deciding to get their children vaccinated may hinge on that small but scary risk.

"The risk of some sort of bad heart involvement is much higher if you get COVID than if you get this vaccine," Dr. Matthew Oster, a pediatric cardiologist at Emory University, told the panel. "COVID is much riskier to the heart."

Last week, FDA's advisers struggled with whether every young child needed a vaccine. Youngsters hospitalized with COVID-19 are more likely to have high-risk conditions such as obesity or diabetes. But otherwise healthy children can get seriously ill, too, and the CDC's advisers ultimately recommended the shots for all of them —even children who've already recovered from a bout of COVID-19.

CDC officials calculated that for every 500,000 youngsters vaccinated, between 18,000 and 58,000 COVID-19 cases —and between 80 and 226 hospitalizations —in that age group would be prevented, depending on the pandemic's trajectory. And CDC officials noted that COVID-19 has caused more deaths in this age group than some other diseases, such as chickenpox, did before children were routinely vaccinated against them.

What about younger children? Pfizer is testing shots for babies and preschoolers and expects data around the end of the year. The similarly made Moderna vaccine also is being studied with young children. But the FDA still hasn't cleared its use in teens, and the company is delaying its application for younger children pending that review.

United brings popular Japanese travel TV show to Guam

GUAM—United Airlines, with the support of the Guam Visitors Bureau, welcomed the popular Japanese television show Tabi Salad to Guam in late October to feature luxury and eco-adventure experiences in a two-part travel feature.

The United PR team in Japan successfully persuaded Tabi Salad to feature Guam in

» **Show spends a week filming in Guam for two-part travel feature for Japanese viewers**
» **Segments to air on Nov. 6 and 13**

anticipation of the resumption of outbound travel in Japan, a top travel source market for Guam for more than 50 years.

Guam will be featured on Nov. 6 and 13 throughout Japan.

Tabi Salad, which translates to "Travel Salad," is a popular Saturday morning show that offers expanded domestic and international travel features for its viewers. Tabi Salad will run two 20-minute features about Guam on the Asahi Broadcasting Corp (TV Asahi) in Japan. The show airs from 8am to 9:30am on Saturdays and has an estimated viewership of five million.

Guam resident Ayaka Yamaguchi, right, is filmed during an episode of Tabi Salad that was shot in Guam. TABI SALAD

Sam Shinohara, United's managing director of Airport Operations for Asia-Pacific said, "We have a team in Japan dedicated to selling Guam, and they work year-round to market the island. Encouraging the popular Japanese TV show to capture what Guam has to offer is one way we support tourism. We saw this as an opportunity to get travelers in Guam's primary source market excited about experiencing Guam again when restrictions ease."

Tabi Salad's contracted local director and his team worked in Guam for a week of filming, spending time in Tumon to capture nature, adventure, and luxury experiences. The crew also ventured underwater to highlight Guam's world-class snorkeling and to other parts of the island to highlight eco-adventures that will be revealed beginning this Saturday.

Guam Visitors Bureau president and chief executive officer Carl T.C. Gutierrez said, "Japan is a very important market for Guam. With our marketing efforts, we are pleased to partner with United to share the safety protocols and attractions that are available during COVID. We look forward to welcoming travelers back as travel sentiments improve and restrictions ease. We also thank United for their daily flights between Tokyo and Guam and their continued commitment."

"We are beginning to see restrictions ease, which is a very positive sign. We've never stopped servicing Japan, and United continues to provide daily service from Tokyo, Narita," Shinohara added. "We will continue to dedicate resources to helping the Japan market recover. Our fleet of airplanes is based here in Guam, and we are ready to add capacity as soon as restrictions in Japan are lifted."

The two-part series on travel to Guam will air on Nov. 6 and 13 and has posted a preview on its website and Facebook page (@tabisalad). Tabi Salad also selected Guam resident, adventure blogger, and social media influencer (@guamingo), Ayaka Yamaguchi, as the show's host.

"Tabi Salad did a fantastic job of capturing some of Guam's best and the latest experiences to reintroduce travelers to the island, even suggesting how to enjoy Guam like a local," Shinohara said. "We look forward to the exposure that the island will receive in Japan and thank GVB for partnering with us to ensure that the best of Guam was represented on screen." ***(PR)***

Nation

Roll up your sleeves: Kids' turn arrives for COVID-19 shots

Hugs with friends. Birthday parties indoors. Pillow fights. Schoolchildren who got their first COVID-19 shots Wednesday said these are the pleasures they look forward to as the U.S. enters a major new phase in fighting the pandemic.

Health officials hailed shots for kids ages 5 to 11 as a major breakthrough after more than 18 months of illness, hospitalizations, deaths and disrupted education.

Kid-sized doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine cleared two final hurdles Tuesday—a recommendation from CDC advisers, followed by a green light from Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

At a Decatur, Georgia, pediatrician's office, 10-year-old Mackenzie Olson took off her black leather jacket and rolled up her sleeve as her mother looked on.

"I see my friends but not the way I want to. I want to hug them, play games with them that we don't normally get to," and have a pillow fight with her best friend, Mackenzie said after getting her shot at the Children's Medical Group site.

With the federal government promising enough vaccine to protect the nation's 28 million kids in this age group, pediatricians' offices and hospitals began inoculating children. Schools, pharmacies and other locations plan to follow suit in the days ahead.

Dr. Rhonda Achonolu comforts her son Amechi, 7, as he is inoculated with first dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for children five to 12 years at The Children's Hospital at Montefiore, Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2021, in the Bronx borough of New York. AP

The atmosphere surrounding the launch of shots for elementary-age students was festive in many locations. California vaccine sites welcomed children with inflatable animals and handed out coloring books and prizes. Vehicles lined up before dawn at an Atlanta site.

Many pediatricians' offices expected strong interest in the shots at least initially, but health officials are worried about demand tapering off. Almost two-thirds of parents recently polled by the Kaiser Family Foundation said they would wait or not seek out vaccines for their kids.

Brian Giglio, 40, of Alexandria, Virginia, brought his 8-year-old son, Carter, in for vaccination at Children's National Hospital in Washington, where kids with underlying conditions got first dibs. Carter has Type 1 diabetes that puts him at risk for complications if he were to become infected.

Giglio said the vaccine was "like a hallway pass for us to begin living life again." And Carter said he can't wait to leave masks behind once he's fully vaccinated, so he can smell the things he used to be able to smell without it.

"I'm ready to trash it," he said, though the CDC still recommends masks in schools and indoor public spaces where virus activity is high, even for the fully vaccinated.

Cate Zeigler-Amon, 10, was first in line Wednesday for a drive-through vaccination at Viral Solutions in Atlanta. The girl enthusiastically bounced around the car before the shot, which she broadcast live on her computer during morning announcements at her elementary school.

Afterward, Cate said she was looking forward to hugging her friends and celebrating her birthday indoors next month "instead of having a freezing cold outside birthday party."

Hartford Hospital in Connecticut vaccinated seven youngsters Tuesday night, minutes after the CDC's director gave the OK, and three more early Wednesday. As they got their shots, one girl squeezed her eyes shut and a boy barely flinched, and other waiting kids applauded.

The vaccine—one-third the dose given to older children and adults and administered with kid-sized needles—requires two doses three weeks apart, plus two more weeks for full protection. That means children who get vaccinated before Thanksgiving will be covered by Christmas. ***(AP)***

US woman who killed mom in Bali indicted on US murder charge

CHICAGO (AP)—A Chicago woman who served more than seven years in an Indonesian prison for killing her mother at a luxury resort on the island of Bali has been indicted on murder conspiracy charges in the United States and taken into federal custody.

FBI agents took Heather Mack, 26, into custody on her arrival at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport on Wednesday morning, according to the U.S. Attorney's office in Chicago

Mack has been charged with conspiring to kill her mother Sheila von Wiese-Mack in a U.S. indictment that was unsealed Wednesday. Also charged is Mack's former boyfriend, Tommy Schaefer, who was also convicted of murder in Indonesia and is still imprisoned there.

With the indictment in which they are charged with conspiracy to commit murder in a foreign country, Mack and Schaefer are also charged with obstruction of justice in the three-count indictment.

At an arraignment on Wednesday afternoon, Mack pleaded not guilty to the charges and U.S. District Judge Charles Norgle ordered that she remain in custody until a detention hearing on Nov. 10.

Heather Mack of Chicago, Ill., center, is mobbed by reporters as she arrives in the courtroom for her sentencing hearing at a district court in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, April 21, 2015. AP

Brian Claypool, Mack's attorney, said Wednesday that the federal charges are "clearly a witch hunt" in response to public pressure after Mack's release from prison.

Speaking by phone from California, Claypool said he will ask the court to throw out the new charges, arguing that conspiracy was included in the charges that Mack was convicted of in Indonesia.

"The U.S. government had a choice to make in 2015," he said. "They could have fought to extradite ... and try her in the U.S. court. They didn't do that."

Mack's daughter, Stella Schaefer, who is 6 years old, was on the plane with her mother, according to Claypool, who said the little girl was "excited" about her first trip to the United States. He declined to say who took custody of the girl when FBI agents took Mack away but said she was not handed over to child protective services. Court records show a Cook County probate judge issued an emergency order Tuesday appointing one of Mack's attorneys, Vanessa Favia, as the girl's guardian. Favia could not be reached for comment.

Murphy ekes out win in NJ, GOP's Youngkin upsets in Virginia

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy of New Jersey narrowly won reelection in his reliably blue state while a Republican political newcomer delivered a stunning upset in the Virginia governor's race, sending a warning Wednesday to Democrats that their grip on power in Washington may be in peril.

In Virginia, Glenn Youngkin became the first Republican to win statewide office in a dozen years, tapping into culture war fights over schools and race to unite former President Donald Trump's most fervent supporters with enough suburban voters to notch a victory.

Meanwhile, Murphy barely eked out a victory against GOP challenger Jack Ciattarelli, who mounted a surprisingly strong campaign on issues including taxes and opposition to pandemic mask and vaccination mandates.

The two states' results were particularly alarming to Democrats because of where they happened. President Joe Biden carried Virginia by 10 points last year. He took New Jersey by more than 15. Given the scale of those victories, neither state was seen as especially competitive when this year's campaigns began.

But the first major elections of Biden's presidency suggested growing discontent among voters. They also underscored that, with Trump out of office, Democrats can't center their messages on opposition to him. The results ultimately pointed to a potentially painful year ahead for Democrats as they try to maintain thin majorities in Congress.

And they put a new focus on congressional Democrats' inability so far to pass Biden's massive domestic policy legislation, though it's unclear whether the defeat will be enough to jolt his party into action.

Speaking from the White House on Wednesday afternoon, Biden said Democrats need to "produce for the American people."

Murphy, in a brief victory speech Wednesday night, alluded to his narrow margin of victory by saying he would "listen to all of New Jersey," but still emphasized Democratic goals like expanding voting rights, raising taxes on the wealthy and defending abortion rights.

Republicans celebrated their strong showing, with Youngkin telling a cheering crowd of supporters that "this is the spirit of Virginia coming together like never before." The GOP's strength extended to down-ballot contests, including the lieutenant governor's race, which Winsome Sears won, becoming the first woman of color to win Virginia statewide office.

McAuliffe formally conceded in a statement Wednesday morning that congratulated Youngkin.

"Losing is never easy," he said. "We put ourselves out there and left it all on the field."

A political neophyte, Youngkin was able to take advantage of apparent apathy among core Democratic voters fatigued by years of elections that were seen as must-wins, as well as growing frustrations with Biden and the economy. He successfully portrayed McAuliffe, a former Virginia governor, Democratic National Committee chairman and close friend of Bill and Hillary Clinton, as part of an elite class of politicians. He also seized on a late-stage stumble by McAuliffe, who during a debate suggested parents should have a minimal role in shaping school curriculums.

Asia

China advice to stockpile sets off speculation of Taiwan war

BEIJING (AP)—A seemingly innocuous government recommendation for Chinese people to store necessities for an emergency quickly sparked scattered instances of panic-buying and online speculation: Is China going to war with Taiwan?

The answer is probably not—most analysts think military hostilities are not imminent—but the posts on social media show the possibility is on people's minds and drew out a flurry of warmongering comments.

Taiwan is a self-governing island of 24 million people China regards as a renegade province that should come under its rule. Tensions have risen sharply recently, with China sending a growing number of warplanes on sorties near the island and the U.S. selling arms to Taiwan and deepening its ties with the government.

Most residents interviewed in Beijing, the Chinese capital, thought war was unlikely but acknowledged the rising tensions. They generally favored bringing Taiwan under Chinese rule by peaceful means, the official position of China's long-ruling Communist Party.

"I don't feel panic but I think we should be more alert about this than in the past," said Hu Chunmei, who was taking a neighborhood walk.

WHO OKs use of India-made COVID vaccine

NEW DELHI (AP)—The World Health Organization granted an emergency use license Wednesday to a coronavirus vaccine developed in India, offering reassurance for a shot the country's regulators allowed long before advanced safety and efficacy testing was completed.

The U.N. health agency said in a statement that it had authorized Covaxin, made by India's Bharat Biotech. The action makes Covaxin the eighth COVID-19 vaccine to receive WHO's green light.

"This emergency use listing expands the availability of vaccines, the most effective medical tools we have to end the pandemic," said Dr. Mariângela Simão, WHO's assistant director-general for access to medicines.

Covaxin was developed by Bharat Biotech in partnership with the Indian Council of Medical Research, the government's apex research body. The vaccine is made using a killed coronavirus to prompt an immune response and is given in two doses.

WHO said the vaccine was found to be about 78% effective in preventing severe COVID-19 and was "extremely suitable" for poor countries due to its much easier storage requirements.

An expert group convened by WHO said there was insufficient data about the vaccine's safety and efficacy in pregnant women; studies are being planned to address those questions.

India's drug regulator authorized Covaxin in January, months before extensive testing in people had been completed, prompting concern from health experts that the shot was given the nod prematurely.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Suspect in Australian girl's abduction to be charged soon

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Police expected to charge a local man Thursday with abducting a 4-year-old girl from her family's camping tent 18 days before police smashed into a locked house and rescued her in an outcome celebrated around Australia. The 36-year-old man was arrested early Wednesday around the time that police found Cleo Smith alone in the house in the town of Carnarvon. "My name is Cleo," the smiling girl told the police officers who rescued her and asked her name as confirmation that they had found the right child. Police Minister Paul Papalia said the suspect, a Carnarvon local, would likely be charged on Thursday. He did not detail those charges, but said the police investigation was continuing. Cleo had disappeared with her sleeping bag on Oct. 16, the second day of a family camping trip at a campground on Australia's remote western coast north of Carnarvon, a community of 5,000 people where her family lives less than 10 minutes drive from the house where she was found.

Thai police colonel, 6 others charged with killing suspect

BANGKOK (AP)—A Thai police colonel, dubbed "Jo Ferrari" for his extravagant collection of cars, and six other officers were charged Wednesday with murder for allegedly killing a suspected drug dealer while trying to extort him for money, authorities said. Col. Thitisan Utthanaphon and the other officers also face charges of extortion, dereliction of duty and confining a person against their will for the Aug. 5 incident at their station, said Ittiporn Kaewtip, spokesperson for the attorney general's office. The suspects, who also include a police major, captain and lieutenant, could face the death penalty if convicted. The attorney general must now decide whether to send the case to court, deputy spokesperson Prayuth Petchkhun said.

Undersea 5.7 earthquake shakes part of eastern Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — A shallow undersea earthquake shook part of eastern Indonesia on Thursday, but there were no immediate reports of serious damage or casualties. The U.S. Geological Survey said the 5.7-magnitude quake struck about 65 kilometers (40 miles) off Amahai, a coastal village on Seram island in North Maluku province. It said the quake was centered about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) beneath the sea. The Indonesian Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency said the quake was unlikely to trigger a tsunami. With around 1 million people, North Maluku is one of Indonesia's least populous provinces.

Thai companies accused of fraud in sales of medical gloves

BANGKOK (AP)—Police in Thailand announced Wednesday the arrest of the head of a company suspected of cheating overseas buyers of millions of dollars they paid for undelivered medical rubber gloves during the coronavirus pandemic. Thai authorities have been cracking down on a surge in rubber glove fraud, including the sale of substandard and used gloves. Police Lt. Gen. Jirabhob Bhuridej said Florida-based company Rock Fintek filed a complaint that Thailand's Sufficiency Economy City Co. failed to deliver 2 million boxes of nitrile gloves worth $15.5 million for which it had paid a 40% deposit. He said two other companies, from France and Hong Kong, also filed complaints about Sufficiency Economy City Co., which marketed gloves branded SkyMed.

World

UN report says Ethiopia's war marked by 'extreme brutality'

GENEVA (AP)—All sides in Ethiopia's yearlong war in the Tigray region have committed abuses marked by "extreme brutality" that could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, the U.N. human rights chief said Wednesday, noting "the big numbers of violations" are linked to Ethiopian forces and those from neighboring Eritrea.

AP

Members of the public join current and former Ethiopian military personnel to commemorate federal soldiers killed by forces loyal to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) at the start of the conflict one year ago, at a candlelit event outside the city administration in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2021.

The conflict that has killed thousands began in November 2020 after a political falling-out between the Tigray forces that long dominated the national government and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's current government. Ethnic Tigrayans across the country have reported being targeted with arbitrary detentions, while civilians in Tigray have described gang rapes, human-caused famine and mass expulsions.

The investigation, a rare collaboration by the U.N. human rights office with the government-created Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, was hampered by authorities' intimidation and restrictions, and didn't visit some of the war's worst-affected locations.

The U.N. told The Associated Press the collaboration was necessary for its team to gain access to a troubled region that Ethiopian authorities have largely prevented journalists, rights groups and other observers from entering.

The report was released a day before the first anniversary of the start of the war and as Africa's second most populous country enters a new state of emergency, with rival Tigray forces threatening the capital, Addis Ababa.

The joint investigation covers events up until late June when the Tigray forces regained much of their region, but it failed to visit some of the deadliest sites of the war, including the city of Axum, because of security and other obstacles. Notably, the report said, obstacles included the Ethiopian government's failure to release satellite phones procured for the investigation—crucial tools as phone and internet service are cut off in Tigray.

In western Tigray, claimed by forces from the neighboring Amhara region, "it was apparent that the Tigrayans had left most of the areas, as it was difficult to find Tigrayans to interview," the report said.

The investigation breaks little new ground and confirms in general the abuses described by witnesses throughout the war. But it gives little sense of scale, saying only that the more than 1,300 rapes reported to authorities are likely far fewer than the real number.

Despite the report's shortcomings, Abiy's office said in a statement that it "clearly established the claim of genocide as false and utterly lacking of any factual basis." Ethiopian Human Rights Commission chief Daniel Bekele said the investigation didn't identify violations amounting to genocide.

WORLD BRIEFS

Globe bounces back to nearly 2019 carbon pollution levels

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP)—The dramatic drop in carbon dioxide emissions from the pandemic lockdown has pretty much disappeared in a puff of coal-fired smoke, much of it from China, a new scientific study found. A group of scientists who track heat-trapping gases that cause climate change said the first nine months of this year put emissions a tad under 2019 levels. They estimate that in 2021 the world will have spewed 36.4 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide, compared to 36.7 billion metric tons two years ago. At the height of the pandemic last year, emissions were down to 34.8 billion metric tons, so this year's jump is 4.9%, according to updated calculations by Global Carbon Project.

Officials tell AP Iran has seized Vietnamese oil tanker

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Iran seized a Vietnamese-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman last month and still holds the vessel, two U.S. officials told The Associated Press on Wednesday, revealing the latest provocation in Mideast waters as tensions escalate between Iran and the United States over Tehran's nuclear program. Iran's powerful paramilitary Revolutionary Guard troops took control of the MV Southys, a vessel that analysts suspect of trying to transfer sanctioned Iranian crude oil to Asia, on Oct. 24 at gunpoint. U.S. forces had monitored the seizure, but ultimately didn't take action as the vessel sailed into Iranian waters.

Belarusian cargo plane crashes in Russia, all 7 aboard dead

MOSCOW (AP)—A Belarusian cargo plane crashed Wednesday while trying to land in eastern Russia, killing all seven people on board, officials said. The Soviet-built An-12 operated by Belarusian carrier Grodno crashed and caught fire near Irkutsk, eastern Siberia. Belarus' Investigative Committee, the top state investigative agency, said there were seven people on board and all of them died in the crash. Russian news reports said the plane crashed while making a second approach after failing to land in a first attempt. The cause of the crash wasn't immediately clear. Interfax news agency cited preliminary materials of investigation indicating that the plane crashed after ice coated its control surfaces under freezing rain.

IN CELEBRATION OF HER NEW LIFE

†Rita Manglona Babauta

Also known as "Rit" or "Ben Rita" (Ponape) was born on February 25, 1931 and was called to join her creator on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at the age of 90.
She now joins her husband †Vicente SN. Babauta, her son †Ray Anthony M. Babauta and daughter †Eleanor B. Blas

Her love and Memories will forever remain within the heart of her:

Children: Oscar M. and Lolita Babauta, (Tricia and Albert & Children, Jesse and †Joann & Daughters, Oscar Jr. and Sabina & Son, Janella & Children) | **†Ray Anthony M. Babauta** (Roselyn and Walter & Children) | **†Eleanor B. and Anthony Blas** (Rosemary) | **Donald and Priscilla Cabrera** (Chad, Lionel, Amber, Cory) | **Yvonne B. and Frank Tenorio** (Lorna and Frank & Children, Abraham, Vicente Joaquin, Brandon) | **Vicente Jr. M. and Linda Babauta** (Nicole and Maynard & Children, Benjamin & Son) | **Ann Doris B. and Ronald Dulog** (Ray Anthony and Lillyan & Son; Terrence John, Vinnie, Angela, Ethan)

Reared Children: †Jose SN. Babauta | †Michael Manglona | Gregory P. Camacho

Care Taker: Ms. Angela Estioco | Ana Mercado

Brothers, Sisters and In-Laws:
Dionicio A. and †Ana Manglona
Martin A., †Florence; Dr. Janna Manglona
Agnes M. McPhetres
Soledad S. Manglona
Maria B. Babauta

Additionally, she will be missed by numerous relatives, nephews, nieces, and friends.

In her new life, she now joins her:
Parents: †Jose M. and †Ana A. Manglona
Parents In-Law: †Jesus C. and †Dolores SN. Babauta

Brother and Sisters In-Laws:
†Crispin A. and Asuncion Manglona
†Manuel A. and Juana Manglona
†Jose A. and Concepcion Manglona
†Carmen M. and Vicente Sablan
†Victorina M. and Manuel Pangelinan
†Herman A. Manglona; Margarita Manglona
†Samuel McPhetres

†Roberto SN. and Trinidad Babauta
†Fidel SN. and Margarita Babauta
†Eugenio SN. Babauta
†Maria SN. Babauta
†Rosalia SN. Babauta

Daily mass of intentions is being offered at the San Antonio Church 6:00pm | Mount Carmel Cathedral 6:00am; in addition, mass is being offered at San Vicente Church, San Roque Church, Kristo Rai, and St. Jude. Funeral and memorial services will be held on Monday, November 8, 2021. Her remains will be escorted from Borja Funeral Home at 8:45am to Mount Carmel Cathedral for responso, holy rosary, viewing and last respects. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00am. Interment services will be at Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers.
Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghillisou, and Thank you very much.

Children and Families

Off the Wall

Potato could be world's biggest

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Colin and Donna Craig-Brown were weeding their garden in New Zealand when Colin's hoe struck something huge just beneath the soil's surface.

As the couple knelt down and began digging around the object, Colin wondered if it was some kind of strange fungal growth, a giant puffball. After Colin pried it out with his garden fork, he scratched away a bit of the skin and tasted it.

A potato.

"We couldn't believe it," Donna said. "It was just huge."

And not exactly pretty. Donna describes its appearance as more of an ugly, mutant look.

But it's quite possibly the largest potato on record. When the couple lugged it into their garage and put it on their old set of scales, it weighed in at a remarkable 7.9 kilograms (17.4 pounds). That's equal to a couple of sacks of regular potatoes, or one small dog.

In the weeks since their unusual find on Aug. 30, the couple's potato has become something of a celebrity around their small farm near Hamilton. They've named the potato Doug, after the way it was unearthed, and Colin even built a small cart to tow Doug around.

"We put a hat on him. We put him on Facebook, taking him for a walk, giving him some sunshine," Doug said. "It's all a bit of fun. It's amazing what entertains people."

A more official weigh-in at a local farming store put Doug at 7.8 kg. The current Guinness World Records entry for the heaviest potato is a 2011 monster from Britain that weighed in at just under 5 kg. The couple say they've applied to Guinness to have Doug recognized and are waiting to hear back.

Donna Craig-Brown holds a large potato dug from her garden at her home near Hamilton, New Zealand Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2021. AP

Guinness didn't immediately reply to a request for an update on the application.

Colin said he doesn't have any secret gardening tips. Usually they throw a bunch of cow manure and straw onto their garden and see what happens. He said they'd been growing cucumbers in that area of their garden before the weeds took over and hadn't planted any potatoes. Doug must have been self-sown, and quite possibly growing for a couple of years or more.

"It's a mystery to me," Colin said. "It's one of nature's little pleasant surprises."

But Doug hasn't proved an easy charge to look after. As the couple showed the potato off, it began drying out and losing weight. Mold started growing from its wounds.

"He was getting a bit pongy," said Colin, referring to the potato's smell.

So Colin cleaned up Doug as best he could and put the potato in the freezer, where it remains.

But Colin may not be done with Doug yet. An amateur brewer, Colin said he's keen to turn Doug into a nice drop of potato vodka.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Giant 'corpse plant' draws crowds in Southern California

ENCINITAS, Calif. (AP)—The bloom of a giant and stinky Sumatran flower nicknamed the "corpse plant" because it smells like a dead body is drawing huge crowds to a Southern California botanical garden. The bloom of the Amorphophallus titanum plant began Sunday afternoon at the San Diego Botanic Gardens in Encinitas. By Monday morning, timed-entry tickets had sold out, The San Diego Union-Tribune reported. More than 5,000 people were expected to visit the garden by Tuesday evening. The bloom of the "corpse plant" lasts just 48 hours and during its peak it emits a putrid odor of rotting flesh to attract carrion beetles and flesh flies that help its pollination process.

Cat got your vote? NYC candidate brings pet to polling place

NEW YORK (AP)—New York City's Republican mayoral candidate, Curtis Sliwa, tried to bring a furry friend to his polling place on Tuesday—one of his many pet cats. Sliwa, who lost the race to Democrat Eric Adams, showed up at his Manhattan voting site with the animal cradled in his arms. It is one of the more than a dozen rescue cats he lives with at his studio apartment. But he was told the cat had to stay outside. Sliwa, who founded the Guardian Angels anti-crime patrol four decades ago, then got in a dispute with poll workers who also wanted him to remove a red jacket emblazoned with his name out of concerns it could violate laws against electioneering at polling places. Eventually, Sliwa was allowed to cast his ballot.

Return to Sender? Stolen Elvis bust is back in Illinois bar

WEST PEORIA, Ill. (AP)—The King of Rock n' Roll is back in the building. An Elvis Presley bust that was swiped from a central Illinois bar has been returned after the story of its theft attracted international attention. Employees at Jimmy's Bar found the missing bust Thursday night sitting on a porch outside the West Peoria saloon, the Peoria Journal Star reported. The theft had been discovered Sunday morning. "He's back!" pub owner Jimmy Spears said early Friday, attributing the bust's return to the widespread attention its theft had attracted. On Wednesday, the bar's Facebook page had made an appeal for its return: "No questions asked."

Science & Technology

China says moon rocks offer new clues to volcanic activity

BEIJING (AP)—Moon rocks brought back to Earth by a Chinese robotic spacecraft last year have provided new insights into ancient lunar volcanic activity, a researcher said Tuesday.

Li Xianhua said an analysis of the samples revealed new information about the moon's chemical composition and the way heat affected its development.

Li said the samples indicate volcanic activity was still occurring on the moon as recently as 2 billion years ago, compared to previous estimates that such activity halted between 2.8 billion and 3 billion years ago.

"Volcanic activities are a very important thing on the moon. They show the vitality inside the moon, and represent the recycling of energy and matter inside the moon," Li told reporters.

China in December brought back the first rocks from the moon since missions by the U.S. and former Soviet Union in the 1970s.

On Saturday, China launched a new three-person crew to its space station, a new milestone in a space program that has advanced rapidly in recent years.

China became only the third country after the former Soviet Union and the United States to put a person in space on its own in 2003 and now ranks among the leading space powers.

Alongside its crewed program, it has expanded its work on robotic exploration, retrieving the lunar samples and landing a rover on the little-explored far side of the moon. It has also placed the Tianwen-1 space probe on Mars, whose accompanying Zhurong rover has been exploring for evidence of life on the red planet.

China also plans to collect soil from an asteroid and bring back additional lunar samples.

DoorDash adds safety features to protect drivers

DoorDash is adding security features to its app to help protect drivers.

The San Francisco-based delivery company said Wednesday it's partnering with security company ADT on the new features, which will be available to all U.S. DoorDash drivers by the end of this year.

Under the new system, DoorDash drivers who are feeling unsafe can connect to an ADT agent using a button in DoorDash's app. The agent will stay on the phone until the driver feels comfortable; if the driver stops communicating, ADT will call 911.

DoorDash is also adding an emergency-assistance button to its app, which drivers can swipe to let ADT know they need immediate help. ADT will contact 911 and then remain in touch with the driver via text messages. ***(AP)***

Why you should turn off Windows 11 automatic data encryption

TECH Q&A
By STEVE ALEXANDER
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Email tech questions to Steve Alexander at steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.

There are always a few surprises in a new Windows operating system.

Even so, I was quite surprised to find that my newly installed Windows 11 Home was encrypting all the data on my PC, even though I hadn't told it to do so.

The fact is, I would never tell Windows to encrypt anything, because it's the equivalent of putting my data in a locked room to which there is only one key. If I couldn't find the key, I'd lose my data.

Microsoft, however, has decided to automatically encrypt the data on every Windows 11 computer without telling you about it. Locking down your data makes your PC safer, the company says.

Dear Microsoft: I will take my chances. I'm turning off encryption in Windows 11 before it's too late and I lose my PC's data. That's my idea of security.

Here's why readers should do the same if they get the free Windows 11 upgrade:

Microsoft didn't give me basic safety information. Encryption scrambles the data on your disk, and that data can only be reassembled if you have the encryption key, a bit of code that functions like a password. So, where is the key? Microsoft didn't tell me. (Some experts believe the encryption key will be stored in your online Microsoft account.)

You could be in big trouble if your Windows 11 PC stops working. Say your PC fails because of a flawed Windows update, a hard disk drive failure or a burned-out component on the main circuit board. Normally, you could take the nonworking PC to a repair shop and have all your data copied from the hard drive (or SSD, a computer chip substitute for a hard drive.) You could then have that data stored on another computer, or on the old one after it's repaired.

But, if your data is encrypted and you don't have the encryption key, you're out of luck. The repair shop won't be able to read your data and it will be lost forever.

Wait a minute, you say. Do I really have to turn off encryption, a new Microsoft security feature, to make sure I won't accidentally lose my data?

You have one other option: Copy all your PC's data to a flash drive or external hard drive. Data stored on those external devices won't be automatically encrypted. If your PC then fails and you lack the encryption key, you'll still have the backups.

But, if you'd rather not make backups every day, here's how to turn off automatic encryption. Go to the Windows 11 Settings (click the gear wheel icon in the tool bar) and click "privacy & security" on the left. On the right, click on "device encryption." You'll see that it's turned on by default; flip the switch to off.

You'll be warned that doing so will start a task that could take a lot of time. Do it anyway. Windows 11 will then decrypt your PC's data and leave it that way.

Note that this automatic encryption issue will only arise if you are able to upgrade from Windows 10 to 11 over the next few months. It turns out that the upgrade is being limited to PCs that can handle the computations needed for several new security features—and PCs more than three years old may be unable to do that. PCs that don't qualify to run Windows 11 can continue to use Windows 10 until October 2025, when Microsoft will stop supporting it. After that, you'll need to buy a new Windows 11 PC.

But, even if your PC is capable of being upgraded to Windows 11, is it a good idea do so? Some experts say you should wait awhile (see tinyurl.com/b6b5dyzt). I'd say go ahead and upgrade. I've been able to turn off the encryption feature I didn't like. And, who knows, maybe Windows 11 will improve PC security.

Life & Style

Judge: Prince Andrew sex lawsuit trial likely in late 2022

NEW YORK (AP)—An American woman's claims that Britain's Prince Andrew sexually abused her when she was 17 will probably be tried in a New York court late next year, if they survive a legal challenge, a judge said Wednesday.

Lawyers for Andrew have asked the court to throw out the civil lawsuit by Virginia Giuffre, who says she was coerced into sexual encounters with the prince in 2001 by the financier Jeffrey Epstein, who killed himself while awaiting trial on unrelated sex trafficking charges.

Prince Andrew

They said the prince never abused Giuffre and accused her of seeking "another payday" at Andrew's expense.

U.S. District Judge Lewis A. Kaplan said a trial date would likely fall between September and December 2022, though that could change because of factors including courthouse coronavirus protocols limit how many trials can occur at once.

Wednesday's conference, conducted electronically, lasted less than 10 minutes and featured only the judge and two lawyers, David Boies for Giuffre and Andrew Brettler for the prince.

Both attorneys said they expected to depose eight to 12 individuals, including Giuffre and Andrew, and a "number of potential witnesses."

The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they choose to come forward publicly, as Giuffre has.

Meanwhile, Epstein's former girlfriend, British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell, is scheduled to go to trial this month on criminal charges alleging she recruited teenage girls for Epstein to sexually abuse from 1994 to 2004. Potential jurors for that trial begin filling out questionnaires Thursday.

Opening statements are scheduled for Nov. 29. Maxwell has pleaded not guilty.

Giuffre has accused Maxwell of being involved in trafficking her to Andrew and other powerful men, but her allegations aren't part of the criminal case.

Maxwell's lawyer on Wednesday again asked a court to free her on bail and likened her treatment in a federal jail in New York to what was experienced by the fictional character Hannibal Lecter in the film "Silence of the Lambs."

Attorney Bobbi Sternheim said in a letter to the judge that although Maxwell, 59, is not being kept in a cage or forced to wear a plastic face guard as Lecter was, the conditions of detention are "reprehensible."

Sternheim said surveillance of Maxwell at the jail was "disturbing and invasive."

U.S. District Judge Alison J. Nathan has thrice before rejected Maxwell's application to be released, even after she offered to post millions of dollars in bail, be guarded around the clock, wear an ankle bracelet and renounce her citizenship in England and France.

Maxwell has had to wear shackles on her ankles and waist and handcuffs on her wrists during court appearances. Sternheim complained that when Maxwell was brought to a courthouse Monday, she was forced to sit alone for hours in a small chilly cell, where she was poked in the leg by a guard when she fell asleep.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Iconic western starring Clint Eastwood dubbed in Navajo

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. (AP)—An iconic western starring Clint Eastwood has been dubbed in the Navajo language. The movie, "A Fistful of Dollars" or "Béeso Dah Yiníljaa'" in Navajo will be screened for free this month on or near the reservation that extends into Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. A premiere for the cast and crew is scheduled Nov. 16 at the movie theater in Window Rock, Arizona. Limited seats are available to members of the public who are vaccinated against COVID-19 and consent to a rapid test on site. The 1964 western is the third major film available in the Navajo language. "Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope" was released in 2013, and "Finding Nemo" came out in 2016 as a way to preserve the Navajo language.

S African Damon Galgut wins Booker Prize for 'The Promise'

LONDON (AP)—South African writer Damon Galgut won the prestigious Booker Prize for fiction on Wednesday with "The Promise," a novel about one white family's reckoning with South Africa's racist history. Galgut had been British bookmakers' runaway favorite to win the 50,000-pound ($69,000) prize with his story of a troubled Afrikaner family and its broken promise to a Black employee—a tale that reflects bigger themes in South Africa's transition from apartheid. Galgut took the prize on his third time as a finalist, for a book the judges called a "tour de force." He was previously shortlisted for "The Good Doctor" in 2003 and "In a Strange Room" in 2010, but lost both times. Despite his status as favorite, Galgut said he was "stunned" to win.

Paul Newman memoir left unpublished to come out next year

NEW YORK (AP)—A memoir Paul Newman left unpublished in his lifetime will come out next fall. Publisher Alfred A. Knopf announced Wednesday that the book, currently untitled, will include Newman's thoughts on "acting, directing, boyhood, family, fame, Hollywood, Broadway, love, his first marriage, his 50-year marriage to Joanne Woodward, drinking, politics, racing, his ultimate ride to stardom, and aging gracefully." Newman, who died in 2008, began the book in the 1980s with the help of screenwriter Stewart Stern, who in turn spoke to dozens of Newman's friends and associates. It was recently found in the Connecticut home where Woodward still lives. "Through Newman's voice, and the voices of others, the book captures the paradoxical and unstoppable rise of a star who wrestled with doubts, believing he was inferior to Marlon Brando and James Dean, and yet transcended his "hunk" status to become an Oscar-winning actor, champion race car driver, social activist, and entrepreneur whose philanthropy has generated nearly a billion dollars for charitable causes," according to Knopf.

"Rust" film armorer says someone may have put bullet in gun

The woman in charge of weapons on the movie set where actor Alec Baldwin fatally shot cinematographer Halyna Hutchins said Wednesday night that she had inspected the gun Baldwin shot but doesn't know how a live bullet ended up inside.

"Who put those in there and why is the central question," Hannah Gutierrez Reed, the armorer for the movie "Rust" said in a statement issued by one of her lawyers, Jason Bowles of Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Hannah kept guns locked up, including throughout lunch on the day in question (Oct. 21), and she instructed her department to watch the cart containing the guns when she was pulled away for her other duties or on a lunch break."

The statement goes on to say that "Hannah did everything in her power to ensure a safe set. She inspected the rounds that she loaded into the firearms that day. She always inspected the rounds."

The statement adds that she inspected the rounds before handing the firearm to assistant director David Halls "by spinning the cylinder and showing him all of the rounds and then handing him the firearm."

"No one could have anticipated or thought that someone would introduce live rounds into this set," Gutierrez Reed's statement said.

The statement also noted that "she did firearms training for the actors as well as Mr. Baldwin, she fought for more training days and she regularly emphasized to never point a firearm at a person."

On Oct. 29, attorneys for Hannah Gutierrez Reed said she doesn't know where the live rounds found there came from and blamed producers for unsafe working conditions.

Santa Fe County Sheriff Adan Mendoza has said there was "some complacency" in how weapons were handled on the set of "Rust."

Investigators initially found 500 rounds of ammunition—a mix of blanks, dummy rounds and what appeared to be live rounds. Industry experts have said live rounds should never be on set.

Additional ammunition, a dozen revolvers and a rifle also were seized in the search of a white truck used for storing props including firearms, according to an inventory list filed Friday in court. ***(AP)***

Woman takes advantage of neighbor's assistance

DEAR ABBY: My husband is close to retirement age and has his hands full with work and yardwork all year long. We have a lot of property to take care of. Two years ago, a retired neighbor asked him to clear the snow from her double driveway during the winter storms. (We don't own a plow.) She started giving him $20 for his hard work. This year, she decided to give him $10 when she felt like it.

This woman is well-off financially. She has two housekeepers, goes out to eat and vacations on a regular basis. When the snow falls, she calls our home constantly to have her driveways cleared even though my husband is at work. How do we put a stop to this when the snow starts falling this winter?

FED UP IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR FED UP: Your husband has been a good neighbor; this woman hasn't acted like one. The next time you get a call like that when your husband is at work, TELL her your husband is "too busy" to help her out. Then suggest she hire a person or snow removal service that does it professionally. She can certainly afford it.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am at a crossroads. My wife and I have grown apart. I thought we could go to counseling to resolve it, but she wants no part of it. My issue is this: My daughter came to me asking why Mommy is kissing "Mr. Jones" and telling him she loves him. I can handle the heartbreak, but for my daughter to see this kills me inside. How do I confront this?

HEARTBROKEN FOR MY CHILD

DEAR HEARTBROKEN: Talk to your wife about what your daughter told you. When couples separate, they usually try to spare their young children the details of their romantic lives until enough time has passed for the kids to adjust to the breakup. That your wife couldn't wait to do this is regrettable. Because she refuses counseling, if you haven't talked to an attorney, the time to do it is now.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My daughter-in-law's mother has a brother who is a pastor. Recently, they held a small Sunday morning service at my daughter-in-law's house. The brother wanted to do a "laying on of hands," where he would say a short prayer about each person.

When it was my turn, he put his hand on my head and prayed for "all my bad habits" to be healed. I was mortified. This was in front of my grown sons and other people I know. Everyone has some bad habits, but why would he single me out to shame and embarrass like that? I don't think his intentions were holy. Advice?

FEELING ABUSED IN FLORIDA

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR FEELING ABUSED: You would feel less "abused" had you told that tasteless individual how his "blessing" made you feel when it happened. However, if you have his phone number, it's still not too late. You deserve an apology. And if you are invited to any more of those small religious services, I suggest you politely decline.

■■■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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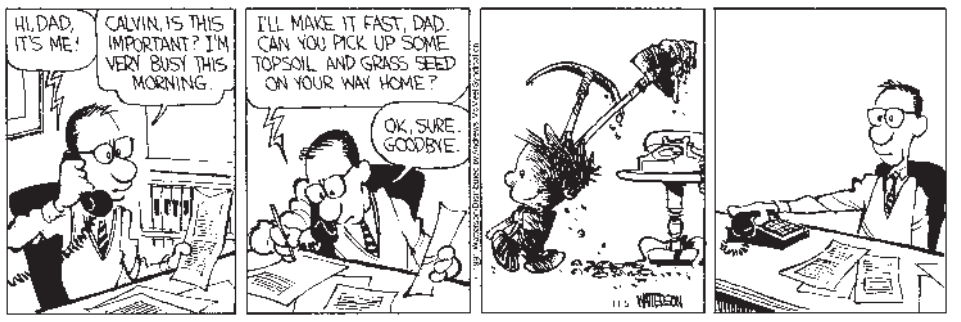
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

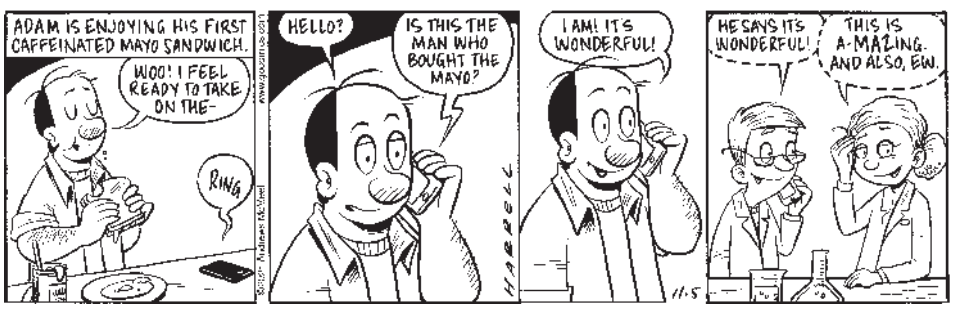

HI, DAD, IT'S ME!
CALVIN, IS THIS IMPORTANT? I'M VERY BUSY THIS MORNING.
I'LL MAKE IT FAST, DAD. CAN YOU PICK UP SOME TOPSOIL AND GRASS SEED ON YOUR WAY HOME?
OK, SURE. GOODBYE.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


ADAM IS ENJOYING HIS FIRST CAFFEINATED MAYO SANDWICH.
WOO! I FEEL READY TO TAKE ON THE-
RING
HELLO?
IS THIS THE MAN WHO BOUGHT THE MAYO?
I AM! IT'S WONDERFUL!
HE SAYS IT'S WONDERFUL!
THIS IS A-MAZING. AND ALSO, EW.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

TO GET YOUR CHOLESTEROL DOWN, YOU NEED TO CUT OUT BACON.
PLUS I'D LIKE TO PRESCRIBE A PILL FOR YOU TO TAKE ONCE A DAY.
DOES IT COME IN BACON-FLAVOR?

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Fluffy neckpiece
4 Church section
8 Reddish brown
12 Rainbow shape
13 Cattle calls?
14 Quatrain form
15 Driver's protection
17 Quite
18 Shoulder muscle, for short
19 Hawk's nest
20 Largest Greek isle
22 Bruce of "Nebraska"
24 Drones
25 Chair for a pair
29 Frazier foe
30 Justice Soto-mayor
31 Actress Long
32 Traveling buddy
34 Cooking fat
35 Operates
36 Yokels
37 Composer Edvard
40 Earth
41 Croquet site
42 Inferior position
46 Yankee nickname
47 Lotion additive
48 MLB stat
49 Oodles
50 Bryn —
51 Bottom line

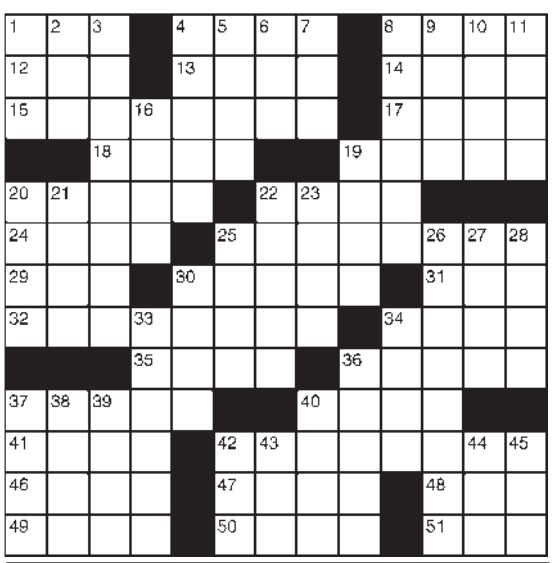
DOWN

1 Some coll. degrees
2 Mined matter
3 College life
4 Saunter
5 Bard
6 Note after fa
7 "Guinness Book" suffix
8 Black birds
9 Taxi alternative
10 Mumbai dress
11 Diggs of "Rent"
16 Hanoi holidays
19 Bailiwick
20 Cartoonist Addams, familiarly
21 Hold sway
22 Taboos
23 Marisa's "Only Love" role
25 Cash advance
26 User's helpers
27 Suffix for billion
28 Tiny amounts
30 Overconfident
33 Hot
34 San — Obispo
36 Al of "Today"
37 Glitzy rock genre
38 — avis
39 Victor's cry
40 Garbage barge
42 "Kapow!"
43 Carte lead-in
44 "Aladdin" monkey
45 Singer McGraw

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	S	I	S	■	C	M	G	■	N	E	R	O
B	L	O	C	■	C	E	_	■	E	V	E	R
B	E	I	A	■	E	I	A	■	G	A	F	S
R	W	A	N	D	A	■	S	T	E	P	■	■
■	■	■	D	O	N	T	G	I	V	E	U	P
D	E	C	A	L	■	R	D	C	■	R	N	A
U	R	A	L	■	P	A	W	■	N	C	I	R
S	I	T	■	P	E	C	■	T	■	N	T	S
■	E	E	P	T	R	Y	I	N	G	■	■	■
■	■	■	G	R	A	F	■	S	T	E	N	T	S
F	L	O	E	■	U	V	A	■	L	A	W	S
O	A	R	S	■	M	E	A	■	L	A	I	N
B	O	Y	S	■	F	T	C	■	A	N	T	S

Yesterday's answer 11-5



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kevin Jonas, 34; Tatum O'Neal, 58; Bryan Adams, 62; Art Garfunkel, 80.

Happy Birthday: Maintain balance, integrity and perspective regarding what's happening. Keep your inner circle close, and listen to both sides of issues and beliefs. How you use the information and utilize your strengths will determine the direction you take. Change is upon you, and finding the path that feels comfortable is the challenge you face. Put your energy where it counts, then proceed. Your numbers are 7, 13, 24, 27, 33, 36, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Approach whoever is available to pitch in and help. Don't take a risk with your health or let anyone put you in a compromising position. Keep your spending to a minimum and your sights on what you can accomplish. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Expect someone to make a change of plans. Plan to go about your business, and focus on self-improvement, personal growth, and raising your profile. Romance will ease stress and help you put your day in perspective. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Gather information, find the best way to present what you have to offer and live frugally. An opportunity will require some finagling if you are going to take advantage of an offer. Consider all aspects before you agree. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Plan something you've never done before. A fun-filled day with people who think like you and enjoy the same things will bring you closer together. Stay within your budget, regardless of what others choose to do. Entertain a prospect someone suggests. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Do what's best. Don't let anger ruin your plans with friends or family. Be open and receptive to what others want and need, and make adjustments that allow everyone to do as they please without feeling guilty. Romance and self-improvement are encouraged. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Share quirky stories with friends and relatives, and it will give you a different perspective on your life and theirs. Be sure to stick to the script when passing along information. Don't let a change at home disrupt a meaningful relationship. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Expect the unexpected. Don't ignore the inevitable; embrace a challenge head-on, and become the mediator. Taking charge will put you in the best position to barter for what you want and feel is best. Leave time for rest, relaxation and romance. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* You'll instinctually see through what others propose. Use your insight, gather information and keep a poker face until you are ready to present what you have to offer in return. Make change count by ensuring it aligns with your long-term goals. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* The fewer people who get wind of what you are doing, the better. Put your energy into whatever brings the highest return, and distance yourself from anyone likely to interfere or waste your time. Keep emotions under control. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Deal with restrictions swiftly. Refuse to let someone's position stop you from doing what's right. A positive change at home will add stability to your life. An unusual offer will encourage you to rethink your next move. Personal improvement is favored. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Speak up before it's too late. If you don't want to participate in a joint venture, say so and move on to something you feel comfortable doing. Use mistakes as leverage, and what you wish for will transpire. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Talk to someone in an authoritative position, and get the lowdown before you decide to take part in something costly. Do your homework. Feeling comfortable about a partnership or joint venture is a must before you participate. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are courageous, passionate and dedicated. You are unique and intuitive.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			8		1			
	7	8				6	5	
		9	2		6	8		
6		2				5		9
4		5				2		8
		4	1		9	3		
	9	6				7	4	
			6		7			

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/05

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

4	1	9	7	5	3	8	2	6
5	8	3	9	2	6	4	7	1
7	2	6	1	8	4	9	5	3
2	3	1	4	9	8	7	6	5
6	5	4	2	3	7	1	9	8
9	7	8	6	1	5	2	3	4
8	9	5	3	7	1	6	4	2
1	6	2	5	4	9	3	8	7
3	4	7	8	6	2	5	1	9

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THINGS THAT FLOAT Solution: 5 letters

P	S	B	A	S	K	E	T	B	A	L	L	O	G	S
S	A	D	N	O	O	D	L	E	S	F	U	F	K	B
S	T	R	R	N	Y	F	(K)	A	O	H	W	R	C	L
D	E	E	A	A	S	(R)	A	O	O	S	E	U	E	A
N	L	C	K	C	(O)	T	T	E	I	I	T	S	D	S
A	B	E	A	(C)	H	B	A	L	L	F	S	E	S	T
B	A	I	T	S	A	U	E	G	S	C	U	W	J	E
M	T	S	K	L	T	J	T	K	E	F	I	N	S	R
R	A	E	L	C	H	B	E	E	A	M	T	S	D	M
A	L	L	E	A	U	A	S	F	S	W	S	H	U	K
P	F	S	I	C	M	T	M	U	I	I	H	I	C	A
M	N	O	K	C	A	M	I	M	R	L	D	P	K	Y
I	I	E	A	I	N	T	A	B	O	A	T	S	S	A
L	T	T	R	M	S	E	E	M	T	C	A	P	S	K
B	I	S	L	A	N	D	P	S	R	E	K	A	O	S

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Armbands, Baits, Basketball, Beachball, Blaster, Blimp, Boat, Bucket, Canoe, Caps, Cork, Debris, Deck, Ducks, Fins, Fish, Foam, Football, Hammock, Humans, Inflatable, Insect, Island, Jets, Kayaks, Kelp, Leaf, Lifejackets, Logs, Lures, Mammals, Noodles, Oils, Parachutes, Pencil, Ships, Soakers, Stadium, Stage, Stairs, Surf, Swimsuit, Wakeboards, Wetsuit

Yesterday's Answer: Planetarium

Jo's Jewels Collector's Edition is back by popular demand! Purchase online at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480.

Durant scores 32, Nets hit 22 3s in 117-108 win over Hawks

NEW YORK (AP)—The Brooklyn Nets are starting to look like the team that was so potent a season ago.

Kevin Durant scored 32 points and led the spurt that broke open the game late in the third quarter, and the Nets beat the Atlanta Hawks 117-108 on Wednesday night for their third straight victory.

"We're finding that rhythm, we're finding each other and it's just getting a lot easier," James Harden said.

Durant had 13 points in a 20-4 run to end the third that turned a tie game into a 16-point Nets lead going to the fourth. He added seven rebounds and five assists overall.

Joe Harris made six 3-pointers and scored 18 points, Harden had 16 points and 11 assists, and the Nets finished 4-2 on their homestand. They begin a six-game road trip Friday.

"We knew it was going to be a process for us. I'm glad we were able to figure some stuff out the last few games and get back on the right page," Durant said. "We know it's going to be tougher on the road but we've just got to keep grinding."

De'Andre Hunter made all six 3-pointers and scored 26 points for the Hawks. Trae Young had 21 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds, but shot just 6 for 22.

Brooklyn Nets' Kevin Durant (7) drives past Atlanta Hawks' John Collins (20) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2021, in New York. AP

76ers 103, Bulls 98

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid had 18 points, nine rebounds and seven assists in his return to the lineup, and Seth Curry scored 22 points and hit a crucial jumper late to lead Philadelphia over Chicago.

Georges Niang added 18 points to help the short-handed 76ers win their fourth in a row. In addition to Ben Simmons (personal reasons), who has missed all eight games, Philadelphia was without starters Tobias Harris (health and safety protocols) and Danny Green (hamstring).

DeMar DeRozan tied a season high with 37 points for Chicago and grabbed 10 rebounds. Zach LaVine scored 27 points.

Pacers 111, Knicks 98

In Indianapolis, Myles Turner scored 25 points, hitting 7 of 10 3-pointers, and had 13 rebounds in Indiana's victory over New York.

Turner scored the first eight points of the game—and the Pacers never trailed. Caris LeVert added 21 points for Indiana.

RJ Barrett led New York with 23 points, and Julius Randle added 18 points and 14 rebounds. The Knicks pulled to 85-83 on Derrick Rose's basket, but the Pacers scored the next five points to regain control.

Clippers 126, Timberwolves 115

In Minneapolis, Paul George had 32 points and eight assists, Reggie Jackson scored a season-high 29 points and Los Angeles beat Minnesota.

George shot 11 of 18, including 4 of 8 from long distance, as Los Angeles had its best shooting night of the season and won its second straight game. The Clippers shot 60.3% from the field and made a season-high 21 3-pointers on 36 attempts.

Anthony Edwards scored 29 points for Minnesota.

Mavericks 109, Spurs 108

In San Antonio, Jalen Brunson had 31 points and 10 rebounds, Luka Donic added 23 points and 12 rebounds and Dallas rallied past San Antonio.

Tim Hardaway Jr. also had 23 points for Dallas.

Dejounte Murray scored 23 points, and Devin Vassell had a season-high 21 for the Spurs. They have lost six of seven since a season-opening victory.

Celtics 92, Magic 79

In Orlando, Fla., Jaylen Brown scored 28 points and Boston used an 18-1 run at the start of the second half to rout Orlando.

Jayson Tatum added 14 points to help the Celtics snap a three-game losing streak and beat the Magic for a seventh consecutive time.

Wendell Carter Jr. had 13 points and 13 rebounds for Orlando.

Raptors 109, Wizards 100

In Washington, Fred VanVleet scored a season-high 33 points, OG Anunoby added 21 and Toronto beat Washington for its fifth straight victory.

Svi Mykhailiuk and Gary Trent Jr. each added 15 points for Toronto.

Bradley Beal scored 25 points for Washington.

Grizzlies 108, Nuggets 106

In Memphis, Tenn., Jaren Jackson Jr. had 22 points, eight rebounds and three blocks in Memphis' victory over Denver.

Ja Morant added 18 points, six rebounds and six assists, and Desmond Bane and Kyle Anderson had 16 points each. Bane's 3-pointer with 1:19 remaining gave Memphis the lead for good in its second straight victory over the Nuggets.

Nikola Jokic led the Nuggets with 34 points and 11 rebounds. Will Barton—who struggled Monday night against Memphis, going 1 for 8 from the field—had 26 points and seven assists and fueled a Denver push after a poor start.

Cavaliers 107, Trail Blazers 104

In Cleveland, Jarrett Allen had 24 points and 17 rebounds in Cleveland's victory over Portland

Portland star Damian Lillard missed a fadeaway 3-pointer from the left wing with two seconds left. Lillard had 26 points and eight assists.

Collin Sexton added 21 points for Cleveland.

Kings 112, Pelicans 99

In Sacramento, Calif., Tyrese Haliburton scored seven of his 20 points during a big run early in the fourth quarter, and the Sacramento Kings bounced back to beat the struggling New Orleans Pelicans 112-99 one night after blowing a late lead at Utah. Harrison Barnes added 23 points and eight rebounds to help the Kings stop a two-game skid.

De'Aaron Fox had 19 points and five assists, and Alex Len scored 12 points with five blocks. Devonte Graham and Nickel Alexander-Walker scored 16 apiece for the Pelicans.

As NBA watches non-basketball moves, numbers dip a bit

After a loss at Washington last week, Atlanta star Trae Young calmly aired some of his frustrations with the way NBA games are being officiated amid a new crackdown on non-basketball moves used to draw contact. The 6-foot-1, 164-pound Young, who made more free throws than anybody in the NBA last season, said he agreed with some of the changes, but he was clearly concerned some fouls are now being overlooked.

A short while later, Kyle Kuzma of the Wizards weighed in on Twitter.

"The new rules changes to the sport are the best thing the league has done in recent history," Kuzma tweeted.

For its part, the NBA is happy with how the first two weeks of the season have gone. Scoring is down slightly, a byproduct of free-throw attempts also being down slightly, but the league believes the way the game is being officiated is working.

"The league sees it as a good move," NBA President of League Operations Byron Spruell said after Tuesday's meeting of the league's competition committee. "We need to continue to stay consistent with it. But the intended effect is there right now, too. Overall, from a league perspective—and aligned with the committee—it's a stay-the-course sort of action with that."

It's not unusual for the NBA to tweak the way rules are enforced, and it remains to be seen how officiating might evolve throughout the season. So far, some of the game's biggest offensive stars are indeed going to the free-throw line less often, and there's some concern that the changes may be allowing more physicality in general, beyond what was intended.

"If we're sacrificing freedom of movement, that's not, in my understanding, the intent of what we're trying to do," Utah coach Quin Snyder said. "I'm cautiously optimistic that that'll balance itself out."

Snyder compared the current points of emphasis to a previous crackdown on flopping. The idea is to curtail certain tricks that seem to have no purpose other than drawing fouls.

"Some of the gamesmanship involved, whether it's kicking a leg into someone, stopping and going backwards and having someone run into you, grabbing someone's arm when you're not in a shooting motion," Snyder said.

Young said he agreed with targeting certain egregious examples, but he said he was frustrated with the way the game is now being called. Young averaged 8.7 free-throw attempts a game last season, and that number is down to 5.3 so far in 2021-22.

It's a similar story for some other perimeter stars. Portland's Damian Lillard has seen his free throws per game dip from 7.2 to 3.9, Washington's Bradley Beal's from 7.7 to 4.2 and Dallas' Luka Doncic's from 7.1 to 4.7. Big men aren't exempt; Philadelphia's Joel Embiid averaged 10.7 attempts last season, 8.8 this season.

And then there's James Harden, who has turned drawing fouls into an art form in which the beauty is very much in the eye of the beholder. Harden dealt with injury problems last season, but in 2019-20, he averaged a whopping 11.8 free-throw attempts per game.

That figure is down to 5.3 this season. Harden attempted 19 free throws in a win over Indiana on Friday night, but he has had four or fewer in every other game.

Steve Nash, Harden's coach in Brooklyn, said players, refs and coaches are all adjusting on the fly.

"I have noticed that you're allowed to be much more physical with the driver or finisher at the rim," said Nash said. "How that will maintain itself throughout the year is yet to be seen."

Beyond the impact on a few high-profile players, some league-wide stats are also showing a decline. The NBA average through Monday was 19.9 free throws per game per team. That's down from 21.8 in 2020-21. Field-goal shooting is at 45%, down 2% from last season, and players are shooting 34% from 3-point range—the worst there in more than 20 years.

Detroit coach Dwane Casey said the dip in 3-point shooting may be because of an increase in defensive switching.

"That's taking away some of the easy 3's," he said.

Monty McCutchen, who oversees officiating matters for the NBA, said that referees are "eager to be aligned" with the expectations of the competition committee. Adjusting is happening, McCutchen said, but he believes the game is being called properly.

"To be clear, we love where the game has been from a freedom of movement perspective over the last few years," McCutchen said. "And we do not want to give that up in any way."

Foul calls are down about two per game when compared to the same timeframe—the first 102 games—last season. Milwaukee guard George Hill, not exactly a big scorer or a volume free-throw shooter, doesn't sound all that confident that he can draw cheap fouls—especially now.

"If I feel like it isn't just going to be an honest true foul, there's no point in trying it," he said. "Because if they don't call it, you look real stupid." ***(AP)***

Summer castoff Jorge Soler transforms into World Series MVP

Atlanta Braves designated hitter Jorge Soler holds up the MVP trophy after winning baseball's World Series in Game 6 against the Houston Astros Tuesday, Nov. 2, 2021, in Houston. AP

HOUSTON (AP)—A spare piece no more, Jorge Soler drove a pitch over the train tracks, out of Minute Maid Park and deep into the heart of Texas. He dropped his bat, tapped his chest twice and jabbed a hand toward the Atlanta Braves dugout, yelling "I'm here!"

Three months earlier, he was a .192 hitter on a fourth-place team.

Two weeks ago, he was sidelined by COVID-19.

Now, he was a World Series star, finishing off the Houston Astros for the Braves' first World Series title since 1995.

A bit player during the Chicago Cubs' drought-smashing victory over Cleveland five years ago, Soler was voted MVP of Atlanta's six-game Series win over the Astros.

"We've known what he can do for so long," Freddie Freeman said in the interview room as Soler waited to walk up to the podium. "Two years ago, he's hitting 50 homers. It's actually pretty incredible what he did in the World Series, getting COVID in the NLCS and missing 10 days and then coming back and not missing a beat."

Soler hit .300 with three home runs and six RBIs. Numbers tell only part of the story.

Each home run was a moment in time, a round-trip trio that will be replayed over and over when Soler is introduced for the rest of his life.

He started off the 117th World Series with something that had not occurred in the first 678 games of baseball's championship — a home run by the very first batter. After taking two balls from Framber Valdez, he turned on a 93.7 mph heater at the letters and drove it 382 feet, about four rows deep into the Crawford seats behind the 19-foot high left-field scoreboard.

Then, after Dansby Swanson hit a tying home run in the seventh inning Saturday at Atlanta, Soler pinch hit against Cristian Javier and got just enough of a hanging slider. The ball sailed over the glove of a charging Yordan Álvarez as he crashed into Truist Park's 6-foot chain link left-field fence and landed in the Astros bullpen for a 3-2 lead that stood up, giving the Braves a three games to one Series lead. Soler saved his best for last.

With the score 0-0 in the third inning Tuesday night, Atlanta put two on with two outs against Luis Garcia. Soler worked the count full.

There was double-barreled action in the Astros bullpen. Freeman watched intently from halfway between the on-deck circle and the plate.

Soler fouled off a slider, slapping the ball harshly behind third base, and then a fastball, even farther foul.

"I was sitting on the offspeed, and I was thinking to myself, if he throws me an offspeed pitch, I can connect and drive the ball," Soler said through a translator. "If he throws me a fastball, I'm just going to try to stay alive during this at-bat."

As catcher Martín Maldonado splayed his right leg wide toward the first base dugout to set his glove down low, Javier threw an 83.4 mph cutter and the ball spun right over the middle of the plate, belt high.

Soler didn't see the ball clear the stadium.

"Immediately after I hit it, I turned around just to look at our dugout and start celebrating," he said.

Garcia didn't turn to look, either. Like Charlie Brown, he knew.

"You know it happens, right? It happens. That's it," Garcia said. "I mean, it's OK. It just happens."

Soler's three Series home runs matched the most for the Braves, equaling Hank Aaron in 1957, Lonnie Smith in 1991 and Ryan Klesko in 1995.

Soler had a Cuban flag draped around him during the celebration, the second World Series MVP from the island nation after the Marlins' Livan Hernandez in 1997.

After defecting from Cuba in 2011, Soler agreed to a $30 million, nine-year contract with the Cubs. He was just 2 for 5 with a walk in the 2016 Series and was dealt to Kansas City that September for reliever Wade Davis.

Soler led American League batters with 48 home runs in 2019—and also with 178 strikeouts. With Atlanta seeking replacements for its depleted outfield, the out-of-contention Royals dealt the 29-year-old on July 30 for minor league right-hander Kaley Kalich.

"It was challenging at first. I felt a little out of my comfort zone. I didn't really know people," Soler said. "It was kind of tough to go to a new place and start making those acquaintances and everything. Within a week, I felt right at home. Everyone in that clubhouse welcomed me in, and it felt instantly, after a little while, just like a family."

Soler revived with the Braves, hitting .269 with 14 homers and 33 RBIs. He didn't drive in any runs in the NL playoffs, missing five games because of a positive COVID-19 test.

He was among the fabulous four players acquired by general manager Alex Anthopoulos ahead of the July 30 trade deadline. Eddie Rosario, Joc Pederson and Adam Duvall also played key roles.

"You can go and get players, and you can throw him in a clubhouse, and sometimes that piece just don't fit into that puzzle," Freeman said. "They came into our clubhouse, and they fit perfectly."

And now World Series rings will fit snugly, too.

Braves lifer Snitker receives reward for 44-year investment

Brian Snitker borrowed plenty from Bobby Cox learning to lead a clubhouse.

Now, he's matched his mentor in chasing down the game's greatest prize, joining Cox as the only Atlanta Braves managers to win the World Series.

The championship clinched with Tuesday night's 7-0 Game 6 win over the Houston Astros was the payoff on Snitker's investment of 44 years as a Braves lifer. After a long career as player, instructor, coach and manager in the Atlanta organization, the 66-year-old Snitker has earned his place in team history.

"Brian Snitker is an amazing human being," star slugger Freddie Freeman said. "And it's absolutely amazing that we get to call him a world champion now for everything he's done for this organization."

Snitker, a former Braves minor league catcher and first baseman, was given his opportunity to start a new career as a coach by Hall of Famer Hank Aaron, the team's farm director. Aaron died at age 86 on Jan. 22, and Snitker became emotional during the World Series when he spoke of talking with Aaron's widow, Billye.

Snitker's patience in his long path to becoming Atlanta's manager was tested in 2013. After serving as Atlanta's third base coach from 2007-13, he was sent back to the minors as Triple-A Gwinnett's manager. He had already served 15 seasons as the manager of almost every Braves minor league team, so he was being asked to retrace his steps.

It didn't seem like a path that would lead him to a big league manager role. When Atlanta fired manager Fredi González during the 2016 season, Snitker wasn't expecting a call.

"I thought it was probably off the table when I left that time in that last recycle like that," Snitker said last week.

Cox, who managed the Braves from 1990-2010 and won a title in 1995, instilled lessons in Snitker that helped him make the most of the opportunity as interim manager in 2016 and then when he was named to the full-time position. His collection of four NL East crowns, and now the World Series championship, are more than he dared to dream of in 2016. He's the second-oldest manager to win his first title, after 72-year-old Jack McKeon with the Marlins in 2003.

"I couldn't imagine how great this has been and what's transpired since that time, because I wasn't looking for that," Snitker said. "I wasn't expecting it. When I got the call, that's not what I was expecting to hear. I've been blessed to be able to be in this position."

One notion taken from Cox was giving players their space in the clubhouse. Snitker rarely makes speeches and doesn't hang out in the players' area.

"He's the kind of guy that, when he does talk, we do listen," said Braves closer Will Smith. "He doesn't talk that often, which is fine by us."

Give at least partial credit to Cox.

"I've been like that pretty much my whole career," Snitker said. "When I went in, it was for a purpose. ... I probably got a lot of that from Bobby, watching him, and how guys respect that. I don't have to be their buddy. I respect each and every one of them. But I kind of feel like that's their haven in there."

Smith says Snitker is "an old-school skipper."

"His door is always open to talk to, but he doesn't come in with rah-rah speeches and things like that," Smith said. "He knows we're pros inside that room, and we kind of police ourselves and show up every day to work and do our best to win the game that day."

Like Cox, Snitker also preaches positive, uplifting messages even after players don't have their best performances.

"We're very fortunate to have him, and the way he treats us is phenomenal," rookie right-hander Ian Anderson said. "He'll shake your hand after every outing, good or bad, and that goes a long way. So you always look for it."

It has been a successful approach. Snitker says he's not sure he would have been as successful if the opportunity had come earlier in his career.

"I've said many times I think this happened to me at a really good time in my life," he said. "I'm probably better versed to handle this position later in my career than I would have been earlier."

Snitker has passed along lessons to his son, Astros cohitting coach Troy Snitker. The younger Snitker said the most important lessons were about work ethic and consistency.

"I think that's the biggest thing that I've taken away from him, being able to watch him from a young age at the ballpark," Troy Snitker said. "He's just so consistent. I think that's the biggest thing. He's so consistent, hard-working. He's the same guy every day when you're in the clubhouse with him.

"I think that's what I got to be around for so many years, and just to see it in action, see how he treats people. He has so many positive qualities about him, but he's always the same guy no matter whether they're winning or losing. He takes the same mindset to the field every day."

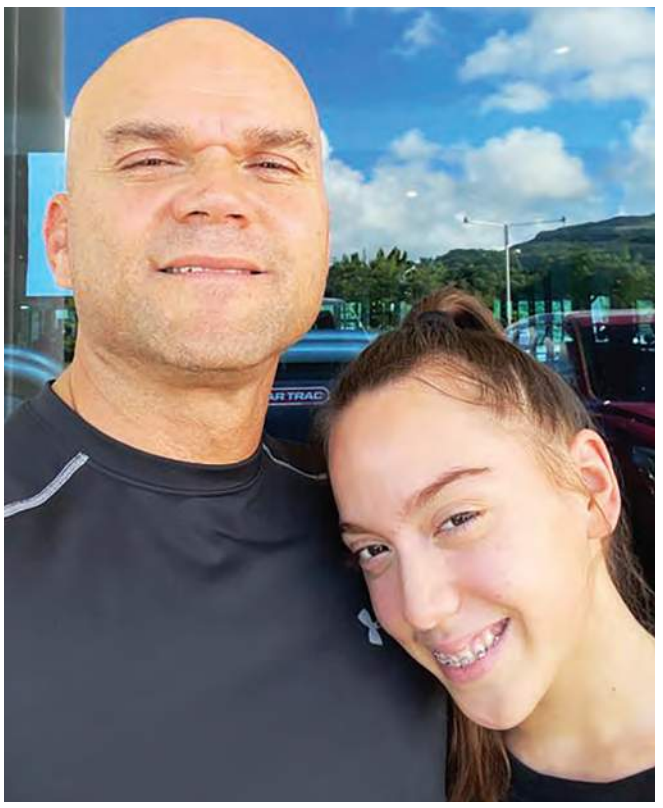
Brian Snitker also showed the value of never giving up.

"Just he's been through so much in his career," Troy Snitker said. "There were plenty of times where he could have easily decided to go do something else, but he stuck with it. I'd say his hard work is the biggest thing that I try to emulate with him."

Brian Snitker said Sunday his wife, Ronnie, is "pretty tapped out a little bit" emotionally while cheering for her husband and son.

"It's exciting," Snitker said. "This is great. Wouldn't want it to be any different. We've enjoyed it, thank God. So we're excited about the rest of the ride." ***(AP)***

Father and daughter to compete in bodybuilding



Stanley and Filomenaleonisa Iakopo will make history when they compete in tomorrow's 2021 Dee Clayton Classic Bodybuilding Championship at the Saipan World Resort.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By MARK RABAGO
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Stanley and Filomenaleonisa Iakopo will mark a first in the CNMI when the father and daughter compete in tomorrow's 2021 Dee Clayton Classic Bodybuilding Championship at the Saipan World Resort.

"It's a dream come true for me. I've always said to my wife that one day, I want our kids to do all the sports with me ever since they were little. I am very proud of my daughter because not every 15-year-old can do this. It takes a lot of heart, self-discipline, and sacrifice to do what Filomenaleonisa does," said Stanley.

Filomenaleonisa looks forward to joining her first bodybuilding competition, which has been made more special since she will be competing with her father.

"I am blessed because I have the best trainer, my dad, who guides me through this journey. This process is definitely not an easy one, but having my dad by my side makes everything less difficult. I am very proud to be the first ever father-daughter competing in the DC Classic competition."

Stanley, who is competing in the men's open, said they started training for the bodybuilding tilt last September. Their training is composed of lifting weights every day at 5am and training Brazilian Jiu Jitsu at Trench Tech Gym with cardio in the evenings. Diet had them eating mostly fish, chicken breast, white meat tuna, vegetables, while cutting out all the junk food and greasy food.

Entered in the women's open figure, Filomenaleonisa said juggling sports and academics isn't easy but doable if you have discipline.

"Although I've always been active in many sports such as Brazilian Jiu-jitsu, motocross, and track and field, I learned how to balance all the things I'm passionate about. It takes a lot of dedication, commitment, and determination while dieting, using most of my time at the gym, school, and spending time with family."

Stanley said just competing with her daughter is already a homerun for him, but added that he will still give his best in tomorrow's competition.

"I am always confident in every sport I do as I stay focused, give it my 100%, and always believe in myself. Whatever the outcome may be, going through this journey with my daughter is very rewarding."

He added that Filomenaleonisa is fearless and will stop at nothing when she sets her mind on a goal.

"Originally she was supposed to do the teen category but she wanted to challenge herself and knowing her competitive nature, she wanted to go up against seasoned competitors."

Filomenaleonisa, a 10th grader at Kagman High School, said she's genuinely very excited but nervous going into the competition.

"This will be my first competition and will be competing against previous champions. I have faith in my training and all the hard work I have put in. Whatever the outcome may be I am proud of accomplishing one of the many goals I have."

MATANSA

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while Khankaew Baothiang and Elaine Sablan hit the board in the 28th and 50th, respectively.

In other results in the division, TanHoldings-1 and TanHoldings-2 notched close victories, while MP United-2 also ended up on the winner's circle of the weekend competition.

MP United 2 downed Shirley's FC, 3-1, behind the two goals of Erlinda Shimizu. MP United-2 drew first blood early with Shimizu connecting on her shot in the ninth minute. Yoshiko Song made it a 2-0 lead with her goal 10 minutes later, while Shimizu got another one before the first half ended when she scored in the 22nd. MPU-2 kept the 3-0 advantage in the majority of the second half before a late goal from Magdalena Flores in the 47th minute ended Shirley's long silence.

In the TanHoldings-2 and Paire duel, the former got an own goal in the second half to pull off a 2-1 win. Rosreeann Deleon Guerrero made the lone goal for TanHoldings, while Linday Nash scored for Paire.

In another tight game, TanHoldings-2 banked on Jasmin Manangan's goal in the 23rd minute to edge Kanoa, 1-0.

PREMIER DIVISION
TanHoldings 8, Shirley's 2

TanHoldings also triumphed in the Premier Division match last Oct. 27 after hammering Shirley's in the curtain-raiser of the double-header.

Allyssya Angeles fired four straight goals and ended up making five to lift TanHoldings to victory—its third in as many games. Jenny Capayas, Kaithynn Chavez, and Jannah Casarino contributed one goal apiece in the lopsided win that also helped TanHoldings keep the No. 1 spot in the team standings.

Alexa Vergara and Jasmin Phan made the twin goals for Shirley's, which absorbed its second loss against only one victory.

Kanoa 4, Paire 0

In the other match in the division, Kanoa coasted past Paire.

Khristelle Itaas registered two goals for the winning team, while Paulyn Joyce and Irish Pagarao chipped in one apiece. Kanoa got its second victory in three games to remain in second place, while Paire has yet to break into the win column this season.

Meanwhile, games in the Dove Women's Fall League 2021 are still suspended due to the recent COVID-19 cases in the community.

Diocese of Chalan Kanoa Bishop Ryan Jimenez and his social media specialist Rommel Buenaflor are all smiles after completing the 2021 Bank of America Chicago Marathon last Oct. 10.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BISHOP

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"Robert Torres and Lynn Tenorio encouraged me to join the Honolulu Marathon. So that was my first marathon. After Honolulu, I was already hooked and in 2017 I joined the New York Marathon and that's when Rommel really helped me train. In 2019, my third marathon was the Le Marathon Des Chateux Du Medoc in Bordeaux, France and it also coincided with my sister's wedding so it was also a vacation as well," he said.

Bishop Ryan and Buenaflor were supposed to run the 2020 Berlin Marathon last year, but the COVID-19 pandemic cancelled the event.

The commitment to running and physical fitness is also borne out of his dedication to winning his personal battle against type 2 diabetes.

"To this day, I'm a diabetic. I've been a diabetic since 2005. My doctor is really glad about me doing marathons but he won't let me get off my medication because Christmas is coming up… I grew up eating rice and since becoming a priest, I've always been invited to a lot of get-togethers that always involves feasts. The goal is to be more consistent in my running lifestyle."

For Bishop Ryan, running is not only a means to become fit or healthy, as it's also a time where he can clear his mind.

"It's really good for meditation and is also spiritual for me. Running is a time for yourself. We also live in such a beautiful island, Beach Road and the road going to Marpi especially are nice run routes."

Next stop for Bishop Ryan is the London Marathon in 2022. "Before the Chicago Marathon I kind of told Rommel that I think this will be my last marathon, but after I said we should sign up for more."

MANNY

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National Baseball Team to a gold medal," he said.

Sablan was given free rein to choose his coaching staff and brought in Derron Flores and Gary Cruz as coaches.

"Playing in our hometown is really a big pressure, but we have the confidence in selecting the right players. Our goal is to win gold. Right now, we haven't had any leagues for the past 2-3 years, but I think it's about time to bring them back and start swinging a real baseball bat," said Sablan.

Sablan is a veteran of the SBL and also coached the Patriots to several undefeated seasons in the Saipan Little League. He also helped the CNMI to gold medal finishes in the 2006 Micronesian Games on Saipan and the 2011 Pacific Games in New Caledonia. Sablan also served as coach of the CNMI baseball team to the 9th Micronesian Games in Yap in 2018.

Aside from the appointments of Sablan, Flores, and Cruz, SBL also brought in Joey Tudela as the national team's strength and conditioning coach.

"His focus will be to make our baseball players in baseball condition…we're really excited to have him on board. He's worked with me and Joey Dela Cruz in the Oceania baseball tournament and we were getting ready for the [Little League] season to start before the pandemic hit."

Santos said SBL's goal is to field the best conditioned national team for next year's Mini Games, which incidentally marks the first time the CNMI will be hosting the quadrennial event.

"We see this process where guys are completely out of shape the first few weeks and Joey has this plan that after a few weeks they will go from only able to walk around the field to being able to run around the field. It's a beautiful process and we're really excited about that."

The SBL president said while the they are shortchanged by SBL not being able to hold a league for 2-3 years now and unavailability of the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field because of much-needed repairs, he's confident that Sablan and company will have what it takes to get the job done.

"We have only 233 days left until the Mini Games so these gentlemen certainly have their work cut out for them in terms of bringing these guys into baseball condition as well as selecting the final cut for the final 20 players," he said.

Durant scores 32, Nets hit 22 3s in 117-108 win over Hawks

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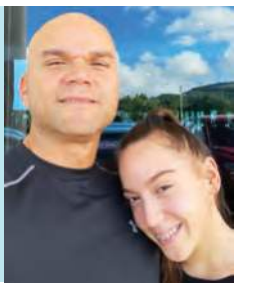

Bishop Ryan conquers Chicago Marathon

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Bishop Ryan Jimenez successfully completed the 2021 Bank of America Chicago Marathon last Oct. 10 in the Windy City. He and Diocese of Chalan Kanoa social media specialist Rommel Buenaflor ran side-by-side and completed the grueling 26.2-mile course in 5:57.

The 49-year-old native of Siquijor, Philippines said his favorite part of the Chicago Marathon was the warmth of the people of Chicago who welcomed and encouraged them every step of the way.

"I really enjoyed the Chicago Marathon. People in the Midwest are just warm. The locals really came out of their way to greet you. I really felt the sense of community perhaps because they're just coming out of the pandemic. They support you and encourage you to finish," said Bishop Ryan.

What made the Chicago Marathon also memorable for Bishop Ryan and Buenaflor was how they inspired people simply by the T-shirts they wore the entire race. The T-shirts were designed by Buenaflor and had Philippians 4:13 on the back that read: "I can do all things through Christ which strengthen me."

"While running there were a lot of fellow runners that thanked us for that passage. For me as a priest without me telling them that I'm a priest it's a way of evangelizing without preaching. We met a woman who was running her 10th marathon and she approached us and told us 'this is our 10th marathon and we're really having a hard time but when I saw the back of your shirt we were encouraged. Some also said 'amen' and 'thank you,'" said Bishop Ryan.

His training for the Chicago Marathon actually didn't have an auspicious start as his busy schedule precluded him from really training as much as he wanted to. In fact, the most he ran before the actual race was 18 miles.

That didn't stop him from completing the race though. "Once I commit to something, I want to see it through the end. Even if I have to crawl to the finish line. In the Chicago Marathon I had cramps also but it never dawned on me to give up."

Joining the Chicago Marathon didn't just came on a whim for the head of the Catholic faithful in the CNMI, as he got into marathons soon after he was ordained as a bishop in 2016.

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Diocese of Chalan Kanoa Bishop Ryan Jimenez crosses the finish line of the 2021 Bank of America Chicago Marathon last Oct. 10.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Manny Sablan named manager of CNMI baseball team

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Saipan Baseball League has chosen Manny Sablan as the manager of the CNMI Men's National Baseball Team for next year's Pacific Mini Games that will be played on Saipan.

SBL president Jay Santos made the announcement yesterday during a press conference at the NMSA conference room inside the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. Santos was joined in the press conference by SBL vice president George Camacho, secretary Mark Flores, treasurer Ben Cabrera, and board members Shine Tenorio, David Attao, and Ben Jones. The other SBL board members are Mark Toves and Pete Sablan.

"The board is extremely confident of this guy's abilities. One thing that we're most impressed with is he speaks softly but carries a big stick… The guy's background is incredible and we're really impressed with his resume."

Santos admitted that the process of selecting the manager for the national baseball team had been a long process.

"Much longer than most of us would've liked. But we feel that at the end of the day, we did it the right way. We've had a number of candidates that applied for the manager position to lead our CNMI Men's

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Manny Sablan, sixth from left, has been selected the manager of the CNMI Men's National Baseball Team for the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022. Also in photo are coaches Derron Flores, eighth from left, and Gary Cruz, second from left, and strength and conditioning coach Joey Tudela, second from right. They are joined by the board of Saipan Baseball League led by its president Jay Santos, right.

MARK RABAGO

Matansa Football Club players cheer for their teammate, right, who battles an MP United FC-1 player for possession during their game in the Novice Division of the Dove Women's Fall League 2021 last Oct. 24 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Matansa shuts down MPU-1

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REPORTER

Matansa Football Club dominated MP United Footbal Club-1, 4-0, in the Novice Division game in the Dove Women's Fall League 2021.

Mary Cris Ta knocked in two goals to lead Matansa's easy victory in the Oct. 24 match at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville. Ta scored her first goal in the ninth minute and the second in the 40th,

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